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ABSTRACT

Designed primarily for English faculty at two-year colleges in California, "Inside English" includes articles on instructional innovations in teaching remedial writing, literature courses, and freshman composition, and on major curricular, administrative, and employment issues in the field. The four issues of volume 13 include the following feature articles: (1) "Writing across the Curriculum: A Unique Value for Learning," by Nancy H. Nadeau; (2) "Writing for Learning: Programs and Ideas," by Trish Geddes; (3) "Blocking Assures Writing across the Curriculum: Innovation at Los Medanos College," by Connie Missimer; (4) "Paired Composition/Content Courses: The Whole Is Greater than the Sum of Its Parts," by Melinda Barth; (5) "Literature Classes at the Community Colleges. Teaching Lit in the Eighties: Go with the Flow?" by Melinda Barth; (6) "Heart Attitudes and Head Notions: Cummings on Composition," by Jack Gill; (7) "'Stopping by Eyes': The Way to the Poem," by Chon Jiardi; (8) "Literature's Reward: Making Order Out of Chaos," by Joyce Lipkis; (9) "Laughter and Literacy: Shakespeare Stoops to Conquer," by Lloyd Thomas; (10) "To Reach the Community College Students: A Rationale for Literature in the Composition Class," by Sara M. Walters; (11) "California Community Colleges: A New Era of Renewal, Revival, and Renaissance," by Jonnah Laroche; (12) "Literature in the Eighties: Literature as Part of Freshman Composition," by Arnold Solkov; (13) "Forty Years Later: Transfer and the English Placement Test," by Jack Gill; (14) "Teaching Literature in a Writing Class: A Workable Humanities Option OR Chasing Windmills?" by Ronald Hartwell; (15) "A Five-Step Plan: How to Sell Your Remedial Program," by Gloria Reid; (16) "Moving Beyond the Basics: On the Merits of Modeling," by Dyan Pike and Irene Menegas; (18) "Overall Teaching Plans: Methods, Textbooks, and Materials. Helping Students Achieve Writing Competence," by Cindy Hicks; (19) "Peer Tutors in the Community College," by Judy Markline; and (20) "The Writing Lab," by Barbara H. White-Wright. (AYC)

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ENGLISH COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA ECCTYC TWO-YEAR COLLEGES

inside english

Vol. XIII, No. 1 | Journal of the English Council of California Two-Year Colleges | October 1985

INSIDE *inside english*

ECCTYC Looks At Writing Across the Curriculum

Los Medanos College "blocks" students as a way to integrate writing and "content" courses. Page 3

Two instructors at El Camino College tried pairing Freshman Comp with philosophy and found it a successful experience. Page 8

A FACCC/ECCTYC conference on Writing Across the Curriculum yielded some interesting approaches to achieving more writing in all disciplines. Page 3

"What's happening to the quality of our English texts?" asks a concerned instructor. "They've become 'pure poppycock.'" Page 10

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WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM: "A Unique Value for Learning"

by NANCY H. NADEAU
Imperial Valley College

The writing-across-the-curriculum program at Imperial Valley College (IVC) was designed to solve a problem faced by many community colleges: increasing numbers of unprepared students entering the classes of instructors unsure of how to solve their remediation problems and uncertain that those students should be there in the first place. Many IVC students have been finding college-level work baffling and frustrating and have been dropping out, not only no better educated but also discouraged by their college experience. Writing-across-the-curriculum activities, it was hoped, would do three things: 1) allow students a written "voice" in their classes, a means of communicating with their teachers without the risk of appearing stupid in class; 2) provide students with articulation skills, especially writing skills, to learn better, to find their own point of view in an academic context, and (as a fringe benefit) to improve their formal writing skills; and 3) give faculty an opportunity to communicate in their subject areas with students and to identify learning problems.

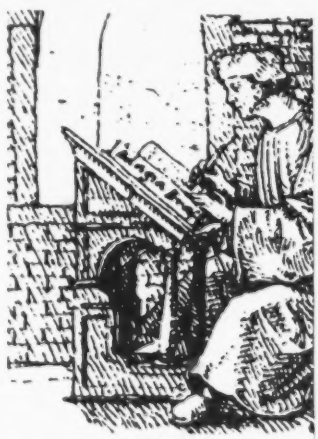
Our program was funded through a Title III faculty development grant, authored and tirelessly promoted by Ruben Lopez, the dean of IVC's External Campus. It provided six units a semester released time for an English Division instructor to do research, and

then, with the help of a second English instructor given the same released time the following year, set up a series of faculty workshops. The grant also stipulated that sample writing assignments be collected in all disciplines, that readability counts be made for all texts used in IVC classes, and that fifteen or so microcomputers be purchased and put to use for improving instruction in language skills.

In the fall of 1983, as the English division instructor entrusted with the planning of this program, I read about writing-across-the-curriculum (WAC), got advice from IVC's two excellent project consultants (Susan McLeod, San Diego State University; Harry Polkinhorn, SDSU-Calexico), collected assignments in a variety of disciplines, arranged for campus text-readability counts, visited other campuses with cross-curricular writing programs to see the kinds of activities that were possible, talked with other-discipline IVC instructors in their offices to ask what kinds of writing they were assigning, and organized a faculty WAC committee to give instructors a deciding vote on the content and scheduling of workshops and on the implementation of the project in general.

By far the most important of these projects was talking with other-discipline instructors about writing. The word was out that "no one assigns writing anymore." But I found that some of my colleagues had been requiring writing for years, devoting many hours per semester to advising students on writing and to evaluating that writing after it had been handed in. I also discovered that they were struggling, as I was, with many students' poor writing skills, poor study habits, unresponsiveness and nonparticipation in the classroom, and seeming lack of know-how for college work.

Possibly I'd thought instructors in other subjects were teaching different students or else the same students in courses in which they were more confident and successful. But that wasn't the case. One art instructor summed up what most of us had probably been feeling for several years when he said, "This isn't what I'd imagined college-level teaching would be." Each of us evidently had been fighting the good fight all alone in his or her classroom or office or at home with lesson plans and student papers. And, of course, many of us had devised ingenious methods for involving and helping our students. Nevertheless, we were all finding teaching grim from time to time. A history teacher chuckled hollowly over a student who told him that the library didn't have anything on John F. Kennedy. (He later found out that she didn't know what a card catalogue was.) An economics instructor told of asking students on an essay to outline methods the Federal Reserve Board could use to adjust the economy. One student responded—"Yes." (Could the student read the question?) Faculty



lounge conversations had become "Can-you-top-this?" rounds reminiscent of Czechoslovakian humor. And it was too easy to blame it all on the students, or on Sacramento, or on modern society. We weren't all demoralized, although some were; we were no longer chagrined because we vere becoming accustomed to a very different college situation from that in which we had been educated; but most of us were feeling professional discomfort.

During each visit I had tried to explain the use of writing for learning, the informal, expressive use that is fundamental to knowledge (as opposed to the formal, transactional use of writing to evaluate students' knowledge). I say "try" because I don't think I ever managed to make this distinction clear. Some instructors were of the opinion that "writing-across-the-curriculum" was an English Division stratagem to get other-discipline instructors to teach English for us. Others listened carefully but simply didn't understand that any division, not just English, could coordinate a cross-curricular writing program, that

(Continued on Page 4)

ENGLISH COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA TWO-YEAR COLLEGES
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inside english welcomes articles, reviews, and other writing of interest to instructors of English in two-year colleges. Submissions should be limited to no more than eight double-spaced typed pages. Although a detailed policy and style sheet is available on request, in general follow *The Chicago Manual of Style* and *The MLA Style Sheet* (Second Edition). Send manuscripts and requests (with a self-addressed envelope to which stamps are clipped) to Barbara Bilson, Editor, *inside english*, English Department, Santa Monica College, 1900 Pico Boulevard, Santa Monica, CA 90405.

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Letters

Dear Editor

CASTING ASPERSIONS

Some of my best friends are English teachers, but when I read Gary Cummings' assertion ["What *Are* We Fighting For?" *i.e.*, March 1985, p.2] that colleagues from other disciplines were "almost gone to computer graded texts and to the track for their workouts" and that they regarded English teachers "as hurdles for their students," my gadfly wings quivered with rage. Egads, are there no limits to the maudlin self-pitying prose that is to be published in *inside english*? And when further in the Cummings lament I read:

> And if I try to draw the purpose of my composition class or model my assignments after those my students receive from other classes at De Anza College—or any other two year college in any state—I will discover more likely the institutional insignificance of my discipline rather than a sense of purpose.

Carramba, I was airborne!

Gary Cummings and the rest of you wild and crazy English teachers should never forget that you don't own this language; that you don't love it any more than the rest of us moilers and toilers; and that the language is, in fact, alive and well in many of our classrooms. At Foothill College, for example, we are in the midst of a dynamic Writing-Across-the-Curriculum project initiated, I might add, not by our English department but by our leader-president, Tom Clements, himself a former engineer. Furthermore . . . oh, what the hell. I'll just finish this buzz note by suggesting that only he among you who invented the sonnet should cast the first aspersion.

DENOS P. MARVIN
Speech Communications
Foothill College

DEAR READERS

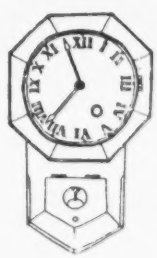
What happened to the rest of you? Thanks to Professor Marvin this space isn't entirely blank. Thanks to Professor Marvin we know that somebody—at least one person—reads *i.e.* But why is Professor Marvin the only one of our almost four thousand readers who felt strongly enough about something to tell us?

Surely someone else out there has thought to him- or herself or griped to a colleague, "I can't imagine what Inez Instructor was thinking of when she wrote that review of Snidely Whiplash's new text. I've used it, and it's a bomb." Surely someone has stated over a cup of coffee in the faculty room, "Paul Professor's article on teaching Joyce's *Ulysses* to remedial readers raised some interesting points, but I disagree with his comments at the end." What about those of you, who, like Professor Marvin, find the hairs on the back of your neck rising with ire? Haven't you muttered to yourself or shouted to someone else, "Colleen Colleague is all wet. What she writes in *i.e.* is . . ."?

Instead of—or perhaps in addition to—mumbling to yourself about shoddy writing or inadequate thinking in the pages of *i.e.* or telling a colleague how much you liked what someone wrote in *i.e.* about a technique for teaching literature, do what Professor Marvin did above: tell us—in writing. A few words on paper about an article that you liked or did not like, about a review you agreed or disagreed with, allows *i.e.* to be a forum for spirited discussion rather than merely a passive purveyor of information and ideas. And, it allows those who write for and who edit *i.e.* to know that you're out there, reading what we have to say—and responding to it.

BARBARA BILSON
Editor, *inside english*
Santa Monica College

Notices



WRITING LAB NEWSLETTER

THE WRITING LAB NEWSLETTER is intended as an informal means of exchanging information among those who work in writing labs and language skills centers. Brief articles (four to six typed pages) describing labs, their instructional methods and materials, goals, programs budgets, staffing, services, etc. are invited. For those who wish to join the newsletter group, a donation of $5 to help defray duplicating and mailing costs (with checks made payable to Purdue University, but sent to the address below) would be appreciated. Please send material for the newsletter, requests to join, and checks to: Professor Muriel Harris, Editor, WRITING LAB NEWSLETTER, Department of English, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN 47907.

WRITING LAB DIRECTORY AVAILABLE

The *Writing Lab Directory* is a compilation of two-page questionnaires completed by writing lab directors. Their answers describe each lab's instructional staff, student population, types of instruction and materials, special programs, use of computers, and facilities. Copies are obtainable for a donation of $13.50, including postage. Prepaid requests only. Please make checks payable to Purdue University and send them to Professor Muriel Harris, Department of English, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN 47907.

CATESOL STATE AND REGIONAL CONFERENCES

All community college instructors are invited to attend the CATESOL conferences; the conferences are not limited to ESL instructors only.

19 October 1985. Tri-County Regional Conference. Santa Barbara City College. Contact: Cliff Rodrigues, Office of Superintendent, 535 E. Main St., Ventura, CA 93001, (805) 647-1597.

19 October 1985. Steinbeck Area Chapter Conference. Hartnell College, Salinas. Contact: Naeda Robinson or Benita Low, 436 Del Monte Farms Rd., Castroville, CA 95012, (408) 663-4087.

19 October 1985. Nevada Chapter Conference. Tonopah, Nevada. Contact: June-Ellen Hall, P.O. Box 6031, Reno, NV 89503, (702) 385-0747.

26 October 1985. Bay Area Regional Conference, City College of San Francisco, 55 Phelan Ave., San Francisco, CA 94112. Contact: Peggy Doherty, (415) 239-3065, or Mo-Shuet Tam, (415) 239-3427.

2 November 1985. Los Angeles Regional Conference. CSU, Northridge, Northridge, CA 91330. Contact: Paul Hamel or Joyce Evans, (818) 787-3074.

9 November 1985. San Diego Area Regional Conference. Foothills Adult Center. Contact: Bob Johnston, 3635 Kite St., San Diego, CA 92103, (619) 296-6938.

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WANTED:
AN ADVERTISING EDITOR FOR *INSIDE ENGLISH*

Because of other commitments, Jim Moore, *i.e.*'s diligent advertising editor, has had to resign his position. Jim's dedication to the job brought more advertising to the pages of *i.e.*—and more needed revenue to produce the journal—than ever before. We will miss you, Jim, and wish you well.

Now, however, *i.e.* needs an advertising editor. The duties? To contact publishers and encourage them to advertise in *i.e.* The hours? As many as necessary to get the job done. The pay? Some excellent contacts with publishers and the eternal gratitude of ECCTYC, *i.e.*, and, especially, this editor.

Please send letters of inquiry, resumes, and letters of intent to Barbara Bilson, Editor, *inside english*, Santa Monica College, 1900 Pico Blvd., Santa Monica, CA 90405.

FACCC/ECCTYC WRITING-ACROSS-THE-DISCIPLINES MINI-CONFERENCE

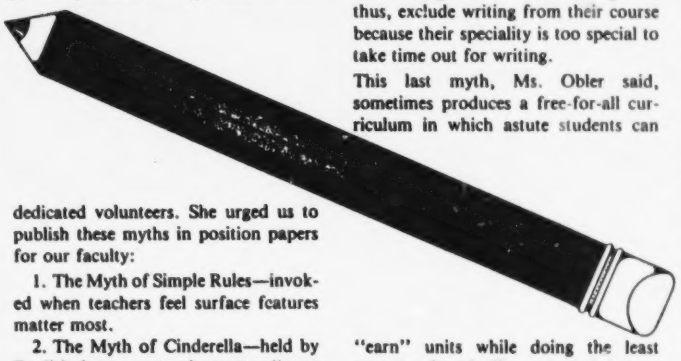
Writing for Learning: Programs and Ideas

by TRISH GEDDES
Cypress College

Last March the Faculty Association of California Community Colleges (FACCC) and the English Council of California Two-Year Colleges (ECCTYC) sponsored a one-day Writing-Across-the-Disciplines mini-conference in Los Angeles. The conference, coordinated by Barbara Bilson of Santa Monica College, surveyed the issues and overviewed several model programs. The following brief summary will, I hope, stimulate further discussion of this significant trend in education.

The first speaker, Susan Obler (Rio Hondo College), shared the insights she gathered while completing her dissertation, *Writing Across the Curriculum: Faculty Perceptions and Practices at Selected Community Colleges*. She underscored the historical precedent for writing in every discipline, reminding us that the present writing-across-the-curriculum (WAC) movement *restores* writing to its rightful place at the *center* of each course. She viewed writing in content-area courses primarily as a tool for active learning and only secondarily as a means of reinforcing writing skills. This emphasis on *learning through writing* overcomes the objections that some teachers raise when they misconstrue writing across the curriuclum as spelling or grammar across the curriculum.

Ms. Obler attacked several myths that block the aceptance of a WAC program by more faculty than a few dedicated volunteers. She urged us to publish these myths in position papers for our faculty:



1. The Myth of Simple Rules—invoked when teachers feel surface features matter most.

2. The Myth of Cinderella—held by English departments who mutter "poor me," convinced that faculty in other departments are their pampered and lazy step-sisters (and brothers).

3. The Myth of Inadequacy—used by faculty in other disciplines to justify their not assigning writing (to assign writing, they must become composition teachers).

4. The Myth of the Magistrate—uttered by those who claim that every word written by a student has to be corrected.

5. The Myth of Specialization—claimed by those who do not believe that writing is a tool for learning and, thus, exclude writing from their course because their speciality is too special to take time out for writing.

This last myth, Ms. Obler said, sometimes produces a free-for-all curriculum in which astute students can "earn" units while doing the least amount of work. She suggested that we ask the instructors who perpetuate this myth, "Are you willing to say that students can pass your course without writing or reading? What data do you have that students got it [the content of the course], kept it, used it?"

How can faculty resistance be overcome? Ms. Obler offered three suggestions: 1) to encourage instructors to assign shorter research papers, 2) to set up a community advisory board to lobby trustees to encourage writing in all courses, and 3) to teach our colleagues how to compose workable paper assignments. For this final suggestion she gave us a practical demonstration. After explaining (with a handout) the concept, we tried to develop our own workable assignment. We rewrote one of our own assignments, incorporating the thirteen qualities characteristic of assignments that work: 1) clear parameters; 2) good *and* mediocre examples; 3) handouts with bite-sized steps; 4) manageable topics; 5) specified audience; 6) criteria for grading; 7) acceptable resources; 8) defined writing stages; 9) pilot testing; 10) built-in flexibility; 11) demands for active learning; 12) confessions; 13) obvious relationship to course goals. This one practical demonstration helped us see that good assignments can make writing more "satisfying, interesting, rewarding . . . and easier"—the orientation Judy Hert called for in making our WAC pitches ["Teaching Teachers: Resistance and Writing Across the Curriculum," *i.e.*, June 1984, p. 3].

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INNOVATION AT LOS MEDANOS COLLEGE

"Blocking" Assures Writing Across the Curriculum

By CONNIE MISSIMER
Los Medanos College

One way to give community college students university-level instruction while working in depth with them on their writing is by having the same instructor teach two or three courses to the same group of students. Los Medanos has embarked on such a plan this semester. I teach the same group three courses: English 1A, critical thinking and humanities. Because Los Medanos is situated in a blue-collar community, we avoided billing this block as an honors program, fearing to exclude many skilled people who do not perceive themselves as honors students. Any student capable of writing college-level English was invited to take the nine-unit block and to work harder than in the normal courses. Thirty-two people volunteered.

The rewards promised to students for their greater efforts were speedier academic progress and in-depth attention. The semester is just two weeks old, but these rewards are already manifest. The students have submitted two four-page essays; they already have those essays back, with extensive notations which they are responding to; a third four-pager is due next Monday. I have never done such a creditable job of lecturing or paper-grading, already tailoring extra assignments for several students. For their part, members of the class are more relaxed and helpful to each other because they are in three courses together. By this time we all know one another.

The contrast is great between this block and the fourth class which completes my load. In this "orthodox" philosophy class I have been able to learn only three names and (as usual) am waiting until test-time to collect writing.

Is it perversity that the students in this fourth-class are not getting the same treatment? I think not. It is impossible to adequately juggle writing assignments *together with* college level instruction in one course when one has several other courses to worry about as well. Something's got to give. Assuming a load of fifteen lecture hours per week at two hours of preparation per lecture, the instructor faces a forty-five-hour work week before *any* student assigments are considered. Factor in monthly essay exams and a ten-page term paper from thirty students in five courses, and even with the most desultory corrections, that instructor would work an eighty-two-hour week.

With blocking, however, the instructor can handle far more writing. Rather than trying to deal with essays and term papers of 120 people, the instructor has to recognize the needs of (say) thirty block students in depth, another thirty of necessity more superficially. In the latter case one can far more quickly correct their papers; hence, more writing. (I am assuming that the block instructor has the English instructor's four-course load—thirty in a three-course block, another thirty in a fourth course.) There is room for preparation of the humanities and critical thinking segments of the block as well as for commenting on papers.

Blocking is kosher. An individual with an MA in one field may receive a limited service credential, which grants the right to teach up to 40 per cent of a full load in another field (or two other fields). The credential is renewable every two years and is valid for life once the instructor has taught for three terms in this other field. [See Julie Swan Hatoff, "Teacher Credentialing: A Trivial Pursuit?" *Faculty Association of California Community Colleges Bulletin*, February, 1985, p. 9.]

Of course, English departments could keep blocking "in house" by, for example, offering a trio of English 1A, critical thinking, and literature. But why not share the pleasures and pangs of composition instruction with colleagues in other areas? What better way to co-opt philosophers and social scientists into a permanent sense of obligation to student writing? The possibilities for blocking are as extensive as the ingenuity and tolerance of instructors.

Connie Missimer is a member of the Philosophy Department. Her critical thinking text, Good Arguments, *will be available from Prentice-Hall next spring.*

UNIQUE VALUE

(Continued from Page 1)

the relationship between writing-for-learning and writing "correctly" is tangential—not unlike the relationship between talking, just using spoken English, and presenting a public speech. And I'm not sure that IVC's WAC program would have had any substance or impact without Toby Fulwiler, whose workshop led all participants to a clear, inductive understanding of this difference between informal and formal writing.

This first workshop in our WAC program was not only our first to plan, but IVC faculty's first to attend in (someone counted) over twenty-one years! So the WAC Committee and I fretted over everything: the dates (we concluded that the best workshop dates are those followed by weekends or holidays); the location (we avoided hard classroom chairs and jittery fluorescent lights reflecting off linoleum), the food (we've been thanked for included options for dieters). But most of all we fretted over the leader. We put priority on the person, not on content or format, and based our choice of Toby Fulwiler on numerous enthusiastic recommendations from people who had attended his workshops. And Fulwiler was excellent. During the workshop he showed himself to be a master teacher with a genius for making every participant feel noticed, respected, and appreciated. Keeping our curmudgeons at bay, he led us inductively, using a series of journal assignments, group work, and full-group sharing, to an understanding of how powerful a learning tool informal writing can be. Forty-two faculty (out of 103) signed up, and after the workshop many of them assigned journals, focused free writing, and a variety of other expressive writing assignments. Last spring, teachers in many different subject areas incorporated writing into their integrated semester lesson plans.

In the meantime, Jean Raulston, IVC's reading coordinator, had begun working closely with me on the project. Together we were able to handle the awesome detail involved in planning, hosting, and following up a

workshop—work that would have been trying (and not half so much fun) for either one of us alone. In addition, Jean added a reading-across-the-curriculum dimension to the project, thus catching the interest of our faculty in another area of language development. In February she distributed readability counts for all campus texts. This information was received with consternation by some instructors, who had no idea how difficult their texts were. As a follow-up, Jean gave interested faculty information on what percentage of their students were reading at what grade levels (more consternation!). For example, two psychology instructors discovered that 75 per cent of their students in Psychology 1A were *not* reading at the fourteenth grade level of their text—and this discovery wasn't unusual.

Although "readibility levels" can be misleading, these statistics highlighted a serious problem, the most obvious solution to which would involve setting reading-level prerequisites and decimating enrollment. The less obvious solution, one more up-beat for both instructors and students, would be to emphasize language development in every class, in other words, reading/writing/language-across-the-curriculum. As part of this shift in the emphasis of our WAC program—from writing to language use in general—Jean plans to organize an intra-faculty sharing of reading assignments for this fall. A social science instructor recently noted that, for faculty as yet not interested in writing-across-the-curriculum, reading-across-the-currirulum might be a starting place for thinking more about language use and articulation skills; as he observed, instructors who say, "I don't assign writing in my classes" would probably never say, "I don't use books in my classes."

Our next workshop was a one-day presentation on designing writing assignments, responding to student writing, and using writing to improve reading comprehension. Reactions to this workshop were mixed. Since the leader, Carol Holder (Cal Poly, Pomona), dealt mainly with formal writing, some instructors found the presentation "technical" and "English-oriented." It was my impression that some faculty who were committed to using formal writing were dismayed by the assumption that they would need to master the technical methodology of grammar and rhetoric instruction. On the other hand, some IVC instructors had, within one week of the workshop, revised long-standing formal writing assignments to make them more effective.

A month later came what was, to me, the most encouraging and heartening accomplishment of IVC's WAC program: a faculty-initiated workshop. An archaeology instructor proposed this workshop for our faculty to share strategies for helping our students write, and IVC's WAC Committee scheduled it, chose facilitators [Dr. Harry Polkinhorn, one of our project consultants; Barry Stampfl; and Dr. Dana Murphy—all of SCSU-Calexico], and planned its agenda for the entire day. Although it was organized at the last minute and programmed as an 8:00 to 5:00 marathon of group work, presentations and general discussions, it was lively and productive. When I have mentioned to WAC coordinators on other campuses that faculty initiated and planned this workshop, their only response has been, "You're kidding!" It is hard to explain that although IVC is isolated, in an economically depressed area with a climate so uncongenial it's an unending source of jokes, still the college has retained superior faculty. Some are known statewide in their fields, in-

cluding, among others, early childhood education (Barbara Macci), archaeology (Jay von Werlhof), foreign language (Pauline Rice), journalism (Jean Niewenhous), nursing (Ellen Saxe, Pat Green), and counseling (Sandy Standiford). Other instructors, although not widely known professionally, are unusually dedicated teachers. But our faculty, in addition to lacking opportunities for professional interaction, has been divided by unionization, layoffs, and widely differing philosophies of education. Many of us hope that the WAC program can mark the beginning of wider collegiality.

Our last workshop of the year was helpful in many ways. It was led by Pat Chavez-Munez and John Eggler (both of Santa Barbara City College), who gave us useful information on bilinguality, the Language Experience Approach (LEA) for college-level students, and grouping techniques. Further, they shared their college's approaches to problems both of our campuses face, giving us insights we are usually denied by geographical isolation and low travel budgets. Appreciating our instructors' need to communicate with one another on touchy issues like language preparedness, they set up a lively question/answer forum. Their understanding of the community college situation was one key to their successful presentation, but most important was their willingness to plan a program specifically for our campus.

The academic year ended affirmatively for the WAC program when Dr. James Walker, our dean of instruction, announced that the administration had scheduled an all-faculty workshop for orientation this fall. Our Title III program will conclude later in September,

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ECCTYC FALL STATEWIDE CONFERENCE

The ECCTYC Executive Committee and Regional Directors have planned a first-rate conference at the Clarion Hotel, San Francisco Airport, 21-23 November 1985.

The Clarion Hotel offers its registered guests the following complimentary services:

Airport Transportation
Buffet Breakfast
Evening Cocktails

The pre-registration fee, $50.00 ($60.00 at the door), includes the Friday luncheon and coffee and pastries Friday and Saturday mornings between sessions.

Bill Decker and Judy Markline, program chairs, have coordinated a program format that will provide provocative presentations in various areas of common interest and concern, with ample time for response and exchange:

- —Jonnah Laroche, Faculty Representative, Board of Governors, California Community Colleges, will speak at the general session Friday.
- —Later that day in a workshop session, Dr. Connie Anderson of the Chancellor's Office will address current community college issues, especially the review of the Master Plan of Higher Education.
- —Ken Cooney, Shasta College, and Nina Theiss, Santa Monica College, will lead a discussion session Thursday afternoon for department chairs: "Issues and Some Answers."
- —At another workshop session Friday afternoon, poets Robert Rippey, Cathleen Long, Jim Krusoe, and Jean Pumphrey will read their poems.
- —At the final session on Saturday, Gary Soto, author of several poetry collections, most recently, *Living Up the Street*, will read from his collections. In addition, Dr. Soto, an associate professor of Chicano Studies and English at UC Berkeley, will discuss the connection between his work and composition. [See "Growing Up Mexican," p. 6 of this issue.]

Other workshop topics include

New Approaches to the Teaching of Shakespeare
Computer and Composing in English 1A
WANDAH in the Classroom
Reading to Write
Composition and ESL

"REviews" features discussions of books and media programs that are suitable for use in writing or literature courses or that have special interest for teachers of English. These reviews should be from 100 to 500 words and should evaluate the book's or program's effective use in a classroom, in a learning resource center, by an individual student, or by the instructor. Include with the review all pertinent publication information, the number of pages or length of running time, and the cost.

WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM—BUT NOT AT THE CC'S

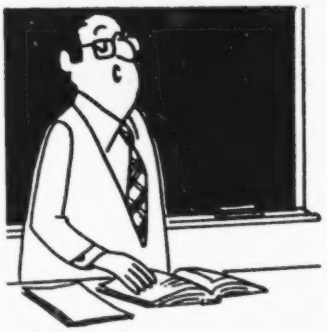
by BERNARD GOLDBERG
Santa Monica College

An insatiable beast, English 1 claims more goals than it provides time for. At least once or twice a semester, partly out of a sense of responsibility and partly out of frustration, I ask myself what the purpose of the course should be. One worthwhile goal is to prepare students to write papers for other classes, and it is to realize this goal that Charles Bazerman, of Baruch College, City University of New York, wrote *The Informed Writer: Using Sources in the Disciplines* (Second Edition). This is a challenging, well-thought-out book, but one that may be too advanced for most community college students.

In a "Rationale for the Text," included in the instructor's manual, Bazerman traces the history of composition theory. Initially, the beginning writer was considered "an apprentice to a tradition, a tradition the writer became acquainted with through

reading." Writing teachers then emphasized the student writer's personal voice, an emphasis which gave way to the belief that the writer needs to be aware of an audience. Bazerman borrows from this later theory and stresses a conversational model, which views writing as a contribution to a continually growing body of written expression, a contribution that takes place within a community that has established practices and standards. This does describe writing in a university setting and is therefore a respectable goal to present to beginning college writers, but it presupposes skills the typical first-year community college student may not have.

The first part of the text introduces methods of responding to reading. In keeping with the model of writing as conversation, Bazerman discusses such concerns as audience and strategy and encourages students to engage in a dialogue with the texts they read by writing responses in the margins and by keeping a reading journal. Covered in separate chapters, paraphrasing helps



students to understand difficult passages, and summarizing helps them to write the research paper and essays about books. Part one concludes with chapters on writing the essay and writing the book review.

The second part concerns the use of sources. Following a discussion of the nature of ideas and sources and a rather lengthy section on "Comparing and Synthesizing Sources," a chapter explains the rationale behind the research paper and demonstrates the steps a writer goes through to prepare such a paper. Provided with a choice of forms (the APA and MLA—both parenthetical and endnote—are represented), students must consult the back of the book for help with documentation.

Part three delineates the kinds of writing assignment that may be required by the various disciplines: the humanities and history (writing about the past), the social and natural sciences (writing about the present), the experimental sciences (writing about controlled situations), and the theoretical disciplines. The final section resembles an appendix on writing, covering, for example, style (with balanced, effective comments on writing paragraphs, sentences, and words); references; and documentation. The instructor's manual offers useful sections on "Classroom Activities and Student Difficulties" and "Grading and Commenting on the Assignment" to accompany each chapter.

Admirably, Bazerman has gathered reading selections that represent the different disciplines and reflect the kinds of writing tasks they require. Unfortunately, some of the selections seem a bit dry. A writing exercise at the end of the chapter on summarizing, for example, asks the student to summarize either one of two essays—one on trauma, complete with graphs and statistics, and the other on the psychology of tiredness. The dryness combined with the formidable appearance of much of the reading will, I fear, discourage most community college students. While the goal of preparing students to write in an academic community is a good one and while I accept that extraordinary enthusiasm on the instructor's part can effect miracles, I believe this book would be most useful in composition courses at four-year colleges and universities (where, incidentally, those who are credited with contributing suggestions for the text teach). At community colleges, *The Informed Writer* would be most appropriate in the advanced composition course.

☐ Bazerman, Charles. *The Informed Writer: Using Sources in The Disciplines*, 2nd ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1985, 518 pp.

GROWING UP MEXICAN

by BILL DECKER
College of the Sequoias

Having just read Gary Soto's newly published collection of reminiscent essays, *Living Up the Street*, I would like to call it to your attention, first as an enjoyable and insightful book for our own human growth, but then also as a book to be considered for use in some of our writing classes, in excerpts or as a whole. The collection gives its readers a sensitive view of a boy's growing up, but a special view, as Gary Soto

is a "brown stick among other brown kids."

With California's growing population of those with Spanish surnames, our community college classrooms will see a commensurate increase of Mexican-American students. It is important that these students read authors with names like *Soto* and have a chance to identify with the experiences these authors relate. I think that Soto's remembrances of growing up in the middle of industrial Fresno—being called a "dirty-Mexican" when very young or questioned, "Mexican, how can you be so stupid?" when he was working at age 17; the violence and fighting that seemed to permeate his life, from the age of six through his junior high years: ". . . it was bob and weave, jab and stick"—will be provocative readings to stimulate honest writing from many of our students.

The shy Chicano will recognize himself/herself as Soto slides into a classroom chair behind the biggest of the students, so he can't be seen by the teacher, and will know Soto's feelings when he relates: "All through junior high and into my first year of high school there were those who said I would never do anything, be anyone. They said I'd work like a donkey and marry the first Mexican girl that came along. I was reminded so often, verbally and in the way I was treated at home, that I began to believe that chopping cotton might be a life-time job for me." Many of our students in agricultural areas will appreciate Soto's descriptions of cutting grapes or chopping cotton or beets—"playing Mexican golf," he chides. Some of those same students will relate to the grinding fear of poverty as Soto tries to keep a few dollars of his earnings in a savings account, even giving us a page of that passbook to see the frequent entries of deposit and withdrawal. Other students will appreciate his realistic descriptions of his finally channeling some of his aggression into a more acceptable form, winning some matches and some praise as he wrestled at 103 pounds. Also, some will relate to the alienation from the members of his own race who did not get an education, who spoke little but Spanish, whose only similarity was a brown skin, as they separated themselves from and made fun of Soto, at the tire shop or in the cotton field where they worked.

A second major theme that runs through the veins of this book is another that will strike deeply for many of our students, regardless of skin color, because so many have shared it—that is, fatherlessness. In the second

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
Summer Review

Welcome back to campus for the 1985-86 academic year! By the time you receive this issue of *i.e.*, you will have your classes well under way, but as I write this in late August, many of you are still enjoying summer vacation.

Though the officers of ECCTYC remain essentially the same, there are new faces on the Board of Directors. As you may remember, we had four new members assuming directorships during the last academic year. Because of leaves, new assignments, and other such commitments, four of our Board members found it necessary to resign their directorships: Pat McGrath, Ann Maioroff, Jim Moore, and Jack Mitchell. Bruce Bennett (Ohlone College)

replaced Pat as a director of Region II; Robert Archer (MiraCosta) took Ann's directorship in Region X; and Andy Sacks (Victor Valley) and Robert Rippy (San Bernardino Valley) replaced Jim and Jack as directors of Region IX. In addition to these four, we have a brand new director in Region VI. At the end of the spring semester, members in that region held their regularly scheduled election and chose Tony Gilleran (Santa Barbara) to join Judy Markline as regional director. We welcome Tony to the Board and look forward to working with him during his two-year term. We also extend our thanks to Jinny Webber (Santa Barbara) for her many years of service on the ECCTYC Board, representing Region VI; she will be greatly missed. We know she will continue actively to support ECCTYC, and we look forward to seeing her at regional and statewide meetings.

Technically, there are no changes in officers, but there is news for you about our Past President, Gertrude Fujii. At the very end of the spring semester, Gertrude surprised her faculty at Los Angeles Valley College and all of us in ECCTYC by taking an early retirement. Gertrude's retirement is a great loss to all of us in the profession. Her warmth, intelligence, and generosity will be missed by her faculty, her students, and all of us who are her colleagues. Though she will, of course, continue this year as past president, ECCTYC will accede to her request to be relieved of many of her duties. We all wish Gertrude a long, happy, productive retirement.

Two issues important to English instructors surfaced this summer: one concerning University of California, Berkeley, and one concerning the State

Board of Governors. You should be informed of both of them since each has a potential impact on our programs.

Dr. Connie Anderson of our Chancellor's Office continued to meet with UCB during the early part of the summer. As a result of those meetings she achieved a tentative oral agreement with Dean Kuhi that would guarantee that students applying for transfer from community colleges that cannot offer parallel English 1A-B courses would not be unduly penalized by being automatically denied admission to Berkeley; rather, if they met all other criteria for transfer, some arrangement would be made for them to complete the work necessary for a parallel sequence at UCB, possibly during the summer prior to their enrollment. This would be good news, especially for community colleges that send very few students to Berkeley and cannot afford to tamper with courses that transfer within their own geographic area. However, at this writing, Dean Kuhi has yet to put the oral agreement into writing and has, in fact, already sent letters temporizing his position. As usual, Dean Kuhi is keeping everyone in a "wait and see" pattern.

The second issue that surfaced concerns our own State Board of Governors. For over a year the State Board agreed that the English requirement for the associate degree would be completion of a course at one level below English 1A (Freshman Composition). And the official interpretation was that a college could have more than one course at this level that would satisfy the requirement. This summer, probably because of a lack of leadership at our Chancellor's Office in Sacramento, factions in that office that must be out of touch with the realities of our system have prepared an amendment that

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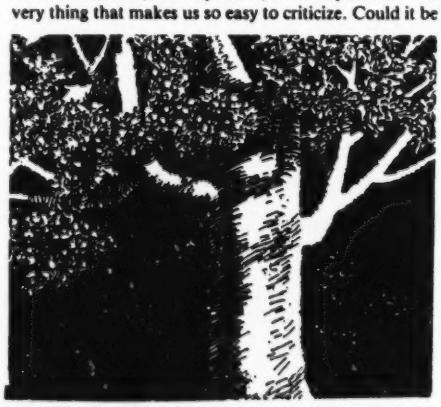
A Quiet Summer in Sacramento . . .

by GORDON TAYLOR
Yuba College

As for actual accomplishments in the world of education, this has been a quiet summer. The Governor did sign the State's budget after vetoing many of the increases the Legislature had put into it. The Legislature had proposed giving $100 million more to the community colleges (CC's) than the Governor had originally planned; the Governor reduced the increase to $31.1 million, more like his first figure. We will get a total of $1.82 billion for 1985-86. Numbers of people and groups put a lot of pressure on him to get much more [see "Sacramento Scene," *i.e.*, May 1985, for more details], but he successfully resisted their efforts. The $68 million or so that he cut would have compensated for inflation over the years, would have eliminated the .91 per cent absentee factor used in computing our ADA, and would have paid for matriculation (vetoed once again and still on the basis that the Master Plan is being reviewed). He did give us a one-time shot of $30 million to catch up on repairs and to replace equipment, on the basis of its not becoming part of the funding base for the future.

Some people are working behind the scenes, though. The Chancellor of the California CC's, his staff, and the Board of Governors are working on the budget of 1986-87. They say we will need $535 million more by then to get our purchasing power back (inflation), develop our staff, fund SB 851 (the funding bill for the CC's), and the like. We probably ought not to hold our breath.

Also at work is the Commission to Review the Master Plan for Higher Education; A. Alan Post, a former legislative analyst of some repute, is its temporary director. The current Master Plan, adopted in 1960, assigned to the CC's their traditional junior college programs along with a number of other things: vocational and occupational programs; community oriented courses; continuing education; and, of course, bunches of remedial courses, as well. The Master Plan said, too, that the CC's were to maintain their open door; in short, to be what in many ways we have become: all things to all people—a task that many people now find too cumbersome, too expensive, even impossible—the very thing that makes us so easy to criticize. Could it be



that the Master Plan had the flaws built into it, so that it was ill conceived from the beginning?

Now, the Commission is reviewing all these things, and the overriding question seems to be whether we should remain some version of what we are now, while letting go of some of the transfer courses and programs, or whether we should become more what we were twenty years or so years ago: more like real junior colleges emphasizing two-year college programs, deemphasizing remedial programs and probably some of the vocational ones, as well.

Mr. Post says that he envisions tougher standards and a clearer definition of what the CC's ought to be

. . . Now Comes Some Action, Maybe

and recommendations for improving the financing and governing of the colleges being among the proposals that the Commission will present to the Legislative Oversight Committee, the legislative group that will review the Commission's review. The report is due at the end of February 1986. Along the way, we probably will hear talk of an academic floor (the current euphemism for entrance requirements), leaving more and more remedial work to the high schools, and talk that vocational programs should be integrated into traditional two-year programs that emphasize broader preparation rather than training for specific jobs: all this hinting at what we used to be, even though it cannot be the same thing since nothing else is.

None of this is established or reliably predictable. The Commission will be preparing its report over the next few months and will presumably have recommendations regarding the California State University (CSU) and the University of California (UC), as well, as it tries to produce a coherent, integrated plan for higher education in California. Also, never fear, dear friends, politics will be a major influence in many of the decisions. Any plan that is based on clear definitions and logical constructions, although it may not be that anyway, will be set upon by people with their cant, humbug, and balderdash, pushing their pet biases and special interests, which is pretty much the way of things.

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PAIRED COMPOSITION/CONTENT COURSES

The Whole is Greater Than the Sum of Its Parts

by MELINDA BARTH
El Camino College

It was only five or six years ago that we in the Freshman Composition Program were advised to motivate students with the simple comment: "Write about whatever is on your mind." Some of us called it The Engagement Ring Theory because one popular teacher and workshop-giver insisted we have our students write about *whatever* was on their mind—the new engagement ring, car, job, or tropical fish tank. The students might write on that single subject all semester, varying only the paper's mode of development. They were writing, after all, and that was the expressed goal of Freshman Comp.

But, most of us decided, the student wasn't really thinking. So after reading thousands of papers on how to change the oil on a '78 Chevy, what Prom Night was supposed to be and how it really turned out, and why coupon collecting can make all the difference in the shopper's life, many of us determined we would find ways to bring our writing course back from Feely-Experience-Stuff to Ideas and Critical Thinking: The Rhetoric Course of The Good Old Days.

Now, after busy years of inventing library and media-review projects around existing readers, we see that the text book writers are easing our paper-invention burdens. The new texts are filled with cross discipline material that should inspire critical thinking and good writing and that should produce meaningful freshman composition classes.

With thinking now restored to the program, I see another important task now for the English Department. I believe we must encourage our colleagues in other disciplines—those very disciplines represented in the new readers—to reinforce what we are doing in the composition class. We must motivate more instructors to incorporate writing projects in their courses. Many of us who teach literature, for example, know that the students often become quite personally involved with the content of the course because they write papers and essay exams in those classes. We also believe that students retain information longer when they learn the course content—in part, at least—by writing about it. We need to convince our colleagues across the campus of our beliefs.

Aiming to test the notion that we could increase involvement in the academic course and improve the content of the papers in the composition class, LaVonne Nelson, a philosophy instructor, and I decided to pair our courses. The cross-discipline project was a valuable teaching and learning experience for the teachers and the students, and I would like to share here my observations about the specific gains inherent in such an academic endeavor.

First, some background. LaVonne and I met on the Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) committee at El Camino College, and there we discovered that we share similar concerns about the quality of community college education—especially the value of writing in every academic discipline. With our shared beliefs we were a natural pair for a combined course, but because LaVonne regularly assigns essay exams, we knew the results of our "experiment" would not be as dramatic as if I were to teach a combined course with an instructor who usually gives only objective exams.

We designed our course on the premise that students in a composition course who write about the content of another academic course would be more interested in each course; would learn more about the material in the content course; and would find a place for immediate, practical application of those thinking and writing skills learned in the composition (1A) class but not always practiced or reinforced in other courses. In a sense, we started out to confirm that the whole of the combined course would be greater than the sum of its parts.

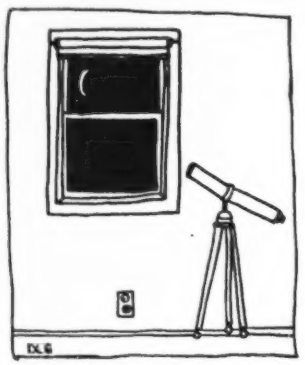
We established a few guidelines for our program. All of the students enrolled in the 1A course were required to be in one of LaVonne's two Philosophy 2 sections. Students were permitted to enroll in the Philosophy 2 course without enrolling in 1A, and these students became a quasi-control on our study. Any 1A student who dropped Philosophy 2 had to drop 1A as well. Our deans supported our plans, and they worked to assure appropriate scheduling of our sections. After some registration confusions in the fall, the deans also helped us resection students who wanted to add either of our classes.

The students gained a great deal from this combined class, and their enthusiastic evaluations indicate they are aware of their gains. First, all of the students felt they learned those composition skills necessary for handling future writing assignments in other classes. All felt it was easier to write the philosophy papers because we discussed, in the composition section, methods of introduction, thesis, organizations, arrangement, and concluding devices using their specific philosophy assignments. All of the students felt my composition section assignments gave them insight into the Philosophy 2 subject matter. All felt the goals of the course—practical application of skills to improve understanding and presentation of content—had been met.

Positive commentary came from many students who reported they knew more classmates in this section than in others at El Camino, and they noted the combined course, therefore, offered some social advantage. I sense that some students at a community college have social needs that may be satisfied, in part, by meeting the same classmates twice during the day. That this connection enhances course involvement suggests a motivating device we instructors might exploit.

The students weren't the only ones to gain in this experience. True, I spent slightly more time organizing this class than I would have had I been teaching my usual 1A course. But I was surprised to discover that I did not spend too much more time than I would have reading and preparing topics around a new reader and designing appropriate library projects to complement the reader. I read most of LaVonne's Philosophy 2 reading assignments, about three hours a week preparation time, and I designed my students' assignments to questions this material elicited or would satisfy. LaVonne helped me construct these essay topics or approved the papers I designed, and I used her study guides to prompt some journal writing assignments. I also shared in the design of and graded for composition skills and mechanics, two of the take-home essay exams LaVonne assigned our students. The other five essays my students wrote were not in excess of my usual 1A assignments. An additional essay and two exercises I assigned were not philosophy related—a short story character analysis and two data-organizing exercises that gave my students practice in specific rhetorical problems. I needed the security of an occasional familiar port when I felt the philosophical seas were getting too turbulent for me to keep my head above water. The usual sentence-skill and mechanics exercises and tests I use in my regular 1A course I was also able to pump into the combined course. In all, preparation time for this class entailed perhaps two hours a week more than I would have needed in a traditional but newly designed composition course. The students' overwhelmingly positive evaluations and my feelings about course revitalization make that time expense inconsequential.

Had I been free during either of LaVonne's two lecture hours I would have attended one of her sections. Student responses indicated that the knowledge of the philosophy content I gained from my reading was sufficient to assign the topics and grade the papers. All of the students indicated that course harmony and instructor consistency were high. LaVonne and I did talk about the course by phone or at lunch, and we met before the semester started. These sessions appear to have been adequate, but instructors planning to combine courses might consider the value of attending each other's lectures.



The greatest advantage of the combined course, for me, came through the interesting content of the papers we assigned and graded. Any composition instructor who has groped for significant but manageable writing topics will appreciate such challenging assignments

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News From Our Regions

REGION VI: CENTRAL COAST

Directors: Tony Gilleran, Santa Barbara City College; Judy Markline, Allan Hancock College.

Tony Gilleran is the new director for Region VI. Tony chairs the Composition and Literature Department at Santa Barbara City College.

Jinny Webber (Santa Barbara City College), former regional director, will spend 1985-86 in England, working on her dissertation.

Lots has been going on at Allan Hancock College. In May, 1985, Howard Jones, computer-assisted writing instructor, presented a workshop on WANDAH [see Nancy Hight, "The Wonder of WANDAH," *i.e.*, October 1984, p. 3] at the UCLA Conference on Computers and Writing.

Jack Miles received a joint National Endowment for the Humanities/Community College Humanities Association grant and spent the month of June at the University of Massachusetts (Amherst) as one of twenty-five community college instructors studying new critical approaches to literature.

This past summer Bob Isaacson attended the South Coast Writing Project at UC Santa Barbara. Rose Brown, a 1981 Fellow, returned as a member of the SCWriP staff.

Judy Markline, SCWriP Fellow 1983, was selected to attend the UC Irvine Training of Trainers Workshop in Thinking/Writing during August.

REGION VII: NORTH LOS ANGELES

Directors: Jo Ray McCuen, Glendale Community College; Lloyd Thomas, Los Angeles Mission College.

JoAn Simmons, the indefatigable Los Angeles City College instructor on loan from the Los Angeles Community College District to UCLA, put together numerous programs, workshops, texts, and conferences for the Office of Academic Interinstitutional Programs at the University of California, Los Angeles. Now that JoAn has retired, her position has been filled by Lloyd Thomas of Los Angeles Mission College and Joan Clemons of Los Angeles Valley College. Good luck to JoAn on her retirement and to Lloyd and Joan in their new endeavors.

REGION X: SAN DIEGO

Directors: Rob Archer, MiraCosta College; Rosanne Hillhouse, Imperial Valley College.

Rob Archer, newly appointed director of Region X, hosted the spring meeting at MiraCosta College on 8 March 1985. ECCTYC secretary, Shirley Sykes, gave an update on the November ECCTYC Board meeting, later taking the chair for the nomination and election of Rob Archer and Rosanne Hillhouse as regional directors for the coming year.

Rosanne then introduced Nancy Nadeau, her colleague from IVC, who reported on IVC's Writing-Across-the-Curriculum Project, inspired by the Los Medanos program and funded through a federal Title III grant [see Ms. Nadeau's article in this issue of *i.e.*, p. 1]. Well-attended and enthusiastically received workshops have stimulated almost half the faculty in eight disciplines to extend the role of writing in their courses. Faculty from five local high schools as well as from San Diego State University, Calexico, have become actively involved. Morale has been boosted to the extent that the IVC Faculty WAC Committee recently organized and sponsored a day-long workshop beyond the provisions of the Title III grant. External credit is being offered through San Diego State and in-house credit through IVC.

Rob Archer presented a report on the English 1A proficiency exit examination at MiraCosta. One advantage of the exam is that the process of developing and scoring the exams brings together the full-time and per-session 1A instructors and fine-tunes their expectations. Another advantage is that students view the instructor as an ally in passing the course. Disadvantages seem to be the amount of stress the exam causes in many students and the amount of time needed to prepare topics and evaluate the essays, especially since the test is given three times a semester. Nevertheless, the English Department plans to continue with the exam while refining it.

Julie Hatoff, MiraCosta's Dean of Instruction and one of ECCTYC's founders, was a welcomed guest at the meeting. Others attending included Leroy Wright; (Southwestern College); Stephen McDonald (Palomar College); Jan Lombardi and David Sardenlin (Miramar College); Gloria Floren, Arlene Lighthall, Patricia Valeton, and Clayton Wiess (MiraCosta). Some participants capped a most enjoyable session by attending a UC San Diego faculty chamber concert in the new MiraCosta theater.

NOTICES

(Continued from Page 2)

18-20 April 1986. State Conference. Oakland Convention Center. Oakland, CA. Site Chair: George Rathmell, (415) 835-3755; Program Chair: Pat Porter (415) 854-0393; Program Chair, Ann Katz, (415) 566-8057.

FOURTEENTH ANNUAL YOSEMITE CONFERENCE

25-27 October 1985. Yosemite, CA. Saturday's keynote speaker will be Ken Macroire, author of *Uptaught* and *Twenty Teachers*, and on Sunday James A. Houston, author of *Farewell to Manzanar*, will speak. In addition, a Friday night poetry reading will feature Nancy Edwards of Bakersfield College (and contributor to *i.e.*) and Rosemary Adam of Claremont High School. Saturday evening will be a BYOP (Bring Your Own Poetry) party.

Ernie Page from the Kern Council of Teachers of English will chair the conference, and Kathy Walsh from FACET will handle registration. For further information contact Ernie Page, School of Education, CSU Bakersfield, Bakersfield, CA 93306.

CONFERENCE OF THE LIVING TREE/ENGLISH

8-10 November 1985. Ojai Valley Inn, Ojai, CA. Outstanding speakers, a wine and cheese reception, and the traditional used book sale. Registration: $30 for Southland Council of Teachers of English members; $40 for non-members. The price per person for two

nights' lodging, Friday dinner, three meals on Saturday, Sunday brunch, and gratuities is $102, double occupancy; $82, triple occupancy; $77 quadruple occupancy. For further information contact Dee Sprague, 2205 Joan Drive, Hacienda Heights, CA 91745.

TEACHING COMPOSITION TO UNDERGRADUATES

5-7 January 1986. Sheraton Sand Key, Clearwater Beach, Florida. The third annual CCCC Winter Workshop sponsord by the Conference on College Composition and Communication is designed to provide additional professional development opportunities to teachers in two- and four-year colleges through a three- strand program of intensive workshops focusing on "Developing Alternative Computer Applications in Writing Programs," "Structuring Reading/Writing Connections for Diverse Student Populations," and "Approaches for Teaching Writing and Thinking to Learn."

Featured speakers and workshop leaders include Bruce C. Appleby (Southern Illinois University), who authored "A Beginner's Guide to Computers and Composition" (ERIC) and many other articles on computers and instruction; Edward P.J. Corbett (Ohio State University), author of *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student* and numerous articles on the teaching of composition, and the 1971 Chair of CCCC; Toby Fulwiler (University of Vermont), coeditor of *Language Connections: Writing and Reading Across the Curriculum*, and author of many articles on writing across the curriculum. Enrollment is limited to 150 persons.

The registration fee of $210 includes tuition, workshop materials, coffee service, a welcoming social hour and banquet, and two luncheons. A deposit of $50 will hold a place for you in the Workshop until 29 November 1985; final payment is due by that date. Registrations submitted after 29 November must be accompanied by full payment. Room rates at the Sheraton Sand Key are $49 per day, single or double occupancy. Special discounted airfares are available to Winter Workshop registrants. Reserve and purchase your tickets through Conference Air Services, Inc., (800) 336-0227, between 10:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. EST.

For further information contact Rosentene B. Purnell, California State University, Northridge, Northridge, CA 91324. Send registration fees to 1986 CCCC Winter Workshop, 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, IL 61801.

***inside english* DEADLINES**

December 1985
Literature Issue
25 October 1985

March 1986
Transfer Issue
24 January 1986

REVIEWS

(Continued from Page 6)

selection, Soto introduces us to his father, showing a rich family relationship among father-son-mother. Then the terse entry: "The next day Father was hurt at work. A neck injury. Two days later he was dead." From that death when Soto was young grow descriptions of the effects: his mother having to candle eggs for Safeway, eight hours a day; she thus leaving the three children at home, ordering them to stay in the house until one o'clock, so she would not have trouble with the police for leaving her kids alone; these inside hours then being taken up primarily with television (Soto's longing to have a family like Beaver's or that of *Father Knows Best*) and such activities as cherry tomato fights or jumping on the sofa or playing with fire. Too many of our students will know the fathers or stepfathers he describes: ". . . most kids on the team didn't have fathers or, if they did, the fathers were so beaten from hard work that they never spent time with them. They came home to open the refrigerator for a beer and then to plop in front of the T.V. They didn't even have the energy to laugh when something was funny."

Many will also realize Soto's frustration when he watches the school tough kid, Frankie, be violently punished by a teacher, Mr. Koligian, for having called that teacher a foul name: ". . . he hurled Frankie against the building. Some of us looked away because it was unfair. We knew the house he lived in: The empty refrigerator, the father gone, the mother in a sad bathrobe, the beatings, the yearnings for something to love. When the teacher manhandled him, we all wanted to run away, but instead we stared and felt ashamed."

As I look again at what I've said above, I realize that *Living Up the Street* has been made to sound like a

grim, dark book, but it's not. The examples above are well balanced with moments of lightness and humor, as when Soto decides to groom his brother for a beauty contest or struggles to make a Little League team or pursues his "nine-year-old's vision of wealth" by looking for neighborhood work or relates some of his first feelings of desire for girls: "She walked with her friend at her side, neither of them talking, and disappeared behind a building as she dragged my heart along like a toy duck on a string. I hung upside down on the bars, blood riding to my head and wished I were dead." Or the next year, yet another girl: "I wet my lips as I approached her slowly, but the words—the thick notepad of love I had composed the night before—failed to flutter open in some great wind at the back of my brain. I walked past her to the end of the hall to rethink my crippled plan." These two examples not only show the lighter side but, I think, are also apt illustrations of the clear, sensitive prose that dominates this book and would be my most important reason for using it as one of the readers in a writing class.

Soto's four previous books were critically acclaimed collections of poetry, and this book's freshness of expression, its innovative descriptions filled with insightful metaphors and similes show that his poetic craft carries over well into his prose. Just a sampling: "Rick practiced pop-ups with Billy Reaves. They looked skyward with each throw in the air, mouths hanging open as if God were making a face between clouds." Or when the bully Frankie has Soto pinned on the schoolyard, ". . . his breath sour as meat left out in the sun." Or the bar where the workers go after the cotton fields: ". . . Mexican music blared from the juke box and cue balls cracked like dull ice." I especially appreciated his sensitive awareness in this passage: "We walked without saying too much because talking ruined the joy of noiseless minds. Jackie understood this, I understood this, so we walked looking about like television cameras, catching families sitting down to breakfast, a dog biting fleas from his paws, a grandpa raking leaves, pomegranate trees almost ready to steal from. We looked around while that endless film wound behind our eyes."

There are a couple of things I'd ask Soto about if I were an editor reading this book in a pre-published form: Is the "While waddling" an intentional elliptical clause or is it an accidental dangling modifier, on p. 76? (Damn schoolmarm!) More importantly, would the last two chapters—those dealing briefly with his more recent experiences of marriage, fatherhood, teaching—fit better in the next book? But those minor points aside, I strongly recommend your reading and considering for use this collection, and I look forward very much to hearing Gary Soto at our ECCTYC Conference in November, when he'll read from this book as well as his next one and relate his own writing to his teaching of writing in his classes at the University of California, Berkeley.

☐ Gary Soto, *Living Up the Street*, San Francisco: Strawberry Hill Press, 1985, 195 pp. $7.95

PURE POPPYCOCK

by KATHRYN LINDSKOOG
Rancho Santiago College

It all started when I began the new year wrong. On January 1, 1983, I was unwillingly coerced into watching the evening news on CBS in Los Angeles. Fortunately, I had pen and paper handy, and here are three of the astoun ding statements I heard.

1. "At the Rose Parade today there was only elbow room." (Only?)
2. "At Venice Beach on New Year's Day some people went into the water, where only penguins fear to tread." (I always assumed that penguins were more cowardly than angels, but not in cold water.)
3. "You say, 'What is the weather going to be like in Los Angeles tomorrow?' It will improve! Of course, it was excellent today. But if it gets even better, we'll have too many people at the broadcasts of the parade and game." (The parade and game, broadcasts and all, would not occur again for a full year; in the meantime I puzzle about what it means to have too many people at broadcasts.)

No wonder that our nation's melting pot is full of mental mush. Young people today grow up listening to television announcers who sound as if they cleared their sinuses with cocaine before going on the air.

Shortly after the new year began I ventured where not only penguins fear to tread—into the freshman composition classroom of my local college, to rejoin the fray on the side of clear thinking and good writing. Like Rip Van Winkle, I had been out of the fight for twenty years. I opened the bright-covered, high-priced English textbooks and got the shock of my life.

"There are varying degrees of bilinguals," one author intoned cryptically in the model outline for a model research paper. I flipped a few pages to see how a model research paper would conclude. "If the oral phase of learning a language can be mastered before a child starts school, the other interrelated phases (reading and writing) should follow with relative ease." If a child learns to talk before he enters school, he will probably learn to read and write in school?

I flipped a few more pages and found direct instruction about how to write such a research paper:

> To put it another way more bluntly, it is not enough to demonstrate that you have read; you must in turn have something to say about what you have read, and you must be able to say that "something" at least clearly, and hopefully even gracefully.

This was not satire; I checked.

Here is a suggested thesis for a research paper:

> The current fear of human's [sic] being displaced by machines, or what alarmists term the "automation hysteria," seems to be based on insubstantial reports.

To me that thesis sentence seems to be based on insubstantial comprehension of both apostrophe use and alarmist rhetoric. I decided to skip the section on research papers.

The next section was on writing about literature. Students were warned:

> Passages from the work should be liberally quoted to support your paper's interpretation of it. Above all, never assume that any reading of a work, no matter how unsupported or farfetched, will do.

I didn't even assume that any reading of that sentence will do. Ever.

"Write a 'third bear' story in the style of your favorite author," the book suggests to students. Ignorant about what 'third bear' stories are, I checked the previous pages and learned that the editor was referring to "The Three Bears," which he seems to have con-

(Continued on Page 12)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

(Continued from Page 7)

would limit the requirement to *one* course at one level below English 1A. What the Board will do with this proposal remains to be seen. Though there are strong supporters on the Board for the original interpretation, the Board remains severely divided on the whole issue of "standards." Again, we have to see what the Board's reaction will be.

Our new Chancellor, Joshua L. Smith—who took office in early September—will face serious problems. Dr. Smith will have to learn fast and exert strong leadership if our system is to retain credibility. We wish him luck. In this era of shrinking funds, decreasing enrollments, and increasing demands we need strong leadership and creative solutions to the many problems that beset us.

In closing, I remind you of the upcoming statewide ECCTYC Conference scheduled for this November at the Clarion Hotel in San Mateo, adjacent to the San Francisco Airport. We are hoping to have representation from every community college campus in the State. Publicity has been sent to all departments of English, and more will follow. We hope to see you at the conference.

JIM CAGNACCI
City College of San Francisco
President, ECCTYC

FALL/ECCTYC

(Continued from Page 3)

The next speakers offered several different models for organizing WAC programs. Nancy Nadeau (Imperial Valley College), with a two-year grant of Title III money, (available only to schools needing to foster higher education among a large population of disadvantaged students) and six units released time to develop and direct the program, offered monthly workshops in using writing to increase learning, in responding to student papers, in designed assignments, and in teaching writing strategies. Ms. Nadeau found that the workshops had the added benefit of rekindling faculty enthusiasm for teaching. [For a more detailed discussion of the IVC program see "A Unique Value for Learning," *i.e.*, October 1985, p. 1.]

Connie Missimer (Los Medanos College) outlined the tandem-course model she is piloting this fall [see "Blocking Assures Writing Across the Curriculum," *i.e.*, October 1985, p. 3]. She encourages other instructors who

have expertise in several fields to offer their own WAC programs by scheduling three required courses back-to-back and enrolling the same students in all three. The effect can be a vibrant blend of humanistic studies: critical thinking—composition or physics; problem solving in math—basic math or blueprint reading for welders, basic electricity. I especially appreciated Ms. Missimer's vision that using writing to foster learning can transform many of our "terminal" students into transfer students, effectively expanding our student population, our transfer program, and our students' horizons.

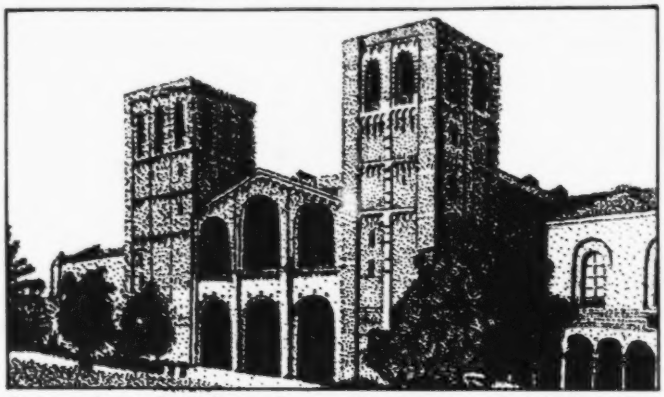
JoAn Simmons, recently retired from Los Angeles City College and from her position as the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) person working in UCLA's Office of Academic Interinstitutional Programs, presented a panel based on *The Shortest Distance to Learning: A Guidebook to Writing Across the Curriculum* [available for $7.00, payable to the Regents of UC, Office of Academic Interinstitutional Programs, 1332 Murphy Hall, University of California, Los Angeles, CA 90024]. This guidebook is the "product of a joint LACCD/UCLA seminar in which some fifteen outstanding LACCD instructors devised ways to integrate writing and student learning" and created materials to design effective writing assignments and essay questions, to respond to student work in ways that foster growth or evaluate, to help students move through the stages of the writing process, and to improve student comprehension of the textbook. "What is unique is that this is the first guidebook representing community college expertise and providing materials appropriate for community college classrooms."

Joining Ms. Simmons were three members of the LACCD/UCLA seminar; they were featured at this conference to attest to the value of the program detailed in *The Shortest Distance to Learning*. John Maddox, instructor in United States history at Los Angeles Valley College, implemented the mandatory journal. It is turned in on test day and graded for completion, given credit, half credit, or quarter credit. Mr. Maddox has seen the journal writing change students' self-image, increase their retention, and foster their learning the content of the course. Mr. Maddox showed slides that documented those gains.

Beverly Shue, microbiology instructor at Los Angeles Harbor College, also concluded that "making [students] write forced them to think," echoing Ms. Simmons' speculation that "Rodin's 'Thinker' may be one of the few who doesn't have a pencil in his hand."

The third member, Joan Clemons, teaches earth and space science at Los Angeles Valley College. She reported that requiring students to keep a class journal, with points worked into the unit exams, increased their involvement in the course. In addition, the journal pinpointed for the instructor what students did and did not understand, increased student achievement, and contributed to the 75 per cent improved retention in a summer class for non-majors (the class demonstrated an overall retention of over 95 per cent!). These model programs illustrated the enthusiasm and well-being that instructors enjoy when they work writing into their courses.

To cap the discussions and



demonstrations at the conference, Professor Andrew Moss described his six-year program at Cal Poly Pomona, where he, together with Professor Carol Holder, wrote *Improving Learning Through Writing*, which served as the text for the LACCD/UCLA seminar. The program that Professor Moss administers offers stipends of two hundred dollars for four days's work from twenty-five to thirty-five professors each year. The stipend acts as an incentive to faculty to participate; an additional incentive comes from the university administration, which demonstrates its strong interest and support. Professor Moss and Professor Holder have led workshops at many universities and community colleges throughout California.

During the question and answer period that followed the presentations, the "hot topic" was funding: how community colleges can find the money to begin and maintain writing-across-the-curriculum programs. As we heard, some colleges, write and receive grants; others use flex days and give in-house credit to reduce expenses and to encourage attendance. California State University, Long Beach, funds its writing-across-the-curriculum program with student fees. The faculty at Golden West Community College attended WAC workshops scheduled during final exams. Various experts—like Susan Obler, the panel from the LACCD, and Professor Moss—will give workshops and guide discussions for fledgling WAC programs—and do so for a modest fee.

Getting a writing-across-the-curriculum program going on our campuses was the focus of this conference. Certainly, that is an important goal. However, once we have the program in place, the task becomes keeping it dynamic and flourishing. Perhaps it is time to consider mentoring the targeted faculty after the initial show is over and helping them *apply* the practices they learned in the workshops. When they run into problems, they need our continuing support. We who know that writing is a way of learning, that writing belongs at the center of any course, need to support our colleagues for whom this concept is new and who are actively trying to put the theory into practice.

—

Trish Geddes teaches in the Language Arts Division at Cypress College.

UNIQUE VALUE

(Continued from Page 4)

when the WAC Committee will sponsor a two-day workshop led by Toby Fulwiler, who will include sessions to help us coordinate WAC efforts throughout the Imperial Valley, possibly under the auspices of the recently formed Imperial Valley Writing Council.

Because of the impact of tuition and drop fees last year, it is not possible to prove statistically whether or not the WAC program has benefited IVC's underprepared students, but it has certainly seemed to. I can cite conversations with art, autotech, psychology, foreign language, history, economics, nursing, and health education teachers as evidence of this.

To anyone coordinating a cross-curricular writing program, I can give suggestions both practical and theoretical. Practically speaking, get good project consultants; consider in-house credit if you can't afford honoraria; don't let poor returns on surveys and questionnaires bother you

(business averages 10 per cent, I read); and serve healthy, tasty snacks at every opportunity. Theoretically speaking, promote the informal, thought-articulating side of writing as an exciting, renewing methodological trend, not as just a fad or an English division ploy. I think that any efforts to encourage faculty to assign more writing will be consistently misunderstood if the distinction between informal and formal writing has not been made clear. And last, consider emphasizing the rallying aspects of writing-across-the-curriculum. California community colleges are, it is generally agreed, in trouble. Our funds have been severely cut, our students are often underprepared, our public image is not clear or affirmative, and our place in the system of higher education is in question. Writing-across-the-curriculum can be a nurturing project for our seemingly undervalued faculties, and emphasis can justifiably be placed on working more closely together to improve our students' chances for success; on planning our own in-service workshops so that they are intellectually sustaining, not canned; and on engendering enthusiasm for our academic mission now that we are developing informal writing as a methodological tool which has, as Janet Emig said, a "unique value for learning."

—

Nancy H. Nadeau is Writing-Across-the-Curriculum Coordinator, Reading/Writing Center Facilitator, and instructor in the English Division at Imperial Valley College.

SACRAMENTO $CENE

(Continued from Page 7)

The community college credential is also the subject of some debate and is, basically, under attack. The Chancellor's Office handles the credentials, for which it charges a fee. The law that authorized the fee is due to expire soon (a sunset clause was written into it); the Chancellor's Office sponsored what it thought was an innocent enough bill to increase the fee from $25 to $40 to cover the actual costs of monitoring and issuing the credentials. When the bill (AB 94, O'Connell; D., Carpenteria) came up in the Assembly Ways and Means Committee, its Chairman, John Vasconcellos (D., San Jose), took the opportunity to jump (with both feet) into the question of requiring a credential to teach in a system of higher education. After all, none is required of those who teach in CSU or UC, and if the CC's really consider themselves to be colleges and part of higher education and to be run by professional people, then they too should have no need of them. The Chairman's attack gave a whole passel of Assembly members the chance that they had been waiting for to simply eliminate credentials altogether. Some heavy lobbying, mainly by Patrick McCallum, lobbyist for the Faculty Association of the California CC's (FACCC), slowed the Committee a bit: he suggested a compromise to amend the bill to keep credentials for two more years, to complete a study of their use and necessity within a year, and to eliminate (to sunset) them in two years. At that time, new laws would have to be written to set up some preocedure for hiring and evaluating qualified people. The bill, a two-year one, was put over to be discussed later on.

There are a number of proposals about that resolve the question in various ways. One, for example, is to have teachers in their respective departments have the primary say in who gets hired, et cetera, and not leave the choices to administrators and managers. This method wold supposedly prevent them from hiring an unqualified body to oversee a class. It would (or could) also eliminate the various and sundry ways people can now get credentials. Many people, the part timers mainly, have less than Master's Degrees. Also, one can get a

limited credential to teach *any* subject with as few as 120 college units, even at a CC, in *any* collection of subjects. One could say that the current system does not work as well as it might. If you are interested in contributing to the debate, you can contact your local Academic Senate, and FACCC is sponsoring a full study of credentials.

On the subject of qualified teachers, CSU, beginning in Fall 1986, will require that candidates for a teacher's credential be in the top half of their class instead of merely surviving in the university. Candidates will also have to show that they are competent in their subject and to demonstrate that they can teach. Apparently, we are now discovering that people have to know something in order to teach it: Wonder of Wonders. The President of CSU, Sacramento, said that, in general, he thought the whole thing is sensible. That certainly is a rousing cheer for high standards. CSU's Chancellor, Ann Reynolds, said, on the other hand, that CSU had to raise standards to attract able students—something that I think would probably do more to attract able people than merely paying them more money. Many able people, and I suspect most of us have known a few, who would have liked to teach and who would have accepted somewhat lower salaries than paid elsewhere have been driven out of teaching because of the anti-intellectual bias and general nonsense one has had to put up with in the education courses. Maybe CSU can raise the level of those courses as well to match the level of the students who are in the top half of their class.

Meanwhile, the National Education Association, in its usual short-sighted ways, states that the way to attract top teachers is to pay them good salaries and the way to have teachers respected by the rest of the society is to pay them good salaries. As it says these things, however, it talks about standards for teachers only to say that they are not really necessary or to admit—grudgingly, under heavy pressure—that, well, maybe, standards do count for something. At its convention this summer, the delegates did debate tests for teachers, and so perhaps there is hope; they also debated such crucial educational issues as supporting Caesar Chavez's United Farm Workers and conducting a demonstration against apartheid in South Africa. Very encouraging developments for education in general.

Welcome back to school for the new year, and may we all see advances in the cause of good language and clear thinking.

POPPYCOCK

(Continued from Page 10)

fused with something else. (I know of an excellent book called *The Third Peacock*.)

"That prose article has unity is easily seen by examining almost any book or magazine article." Come again?

> Very often, when skilled students read a book, they underline certain passages. This is a good technique—if the proper sections are selected. The single sentence that should be underlined is the thesis or purpose statement of the book, its generative sentence.

Are students supposed to laugh or cry over the price they paid for this book that tells them they should underline just one sentence in every book? Perhaps what they should underline in this one is the pricemark; it serves as kind of a purpose statement.

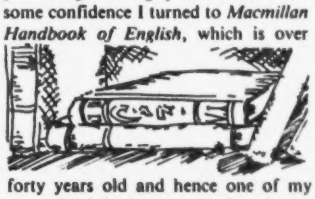
> In the beginning was the *logo*, says the Bible—the idea, the plan, caught in a flash as if in a single word. Find your *logos*, and you are ready to round out your essay and set it spinning.

Somehow this new exegesis of a key New Testament passage makes me into a blasphemous unbeliever right off. But how does one find one's *logos*? The author explains.

> The *about-ness* puts an argumentative edge on the subject. When you have something to say *about* cats, you have found your underlying idea.

The spinning of this particular essay about how to form and spin an essay makes me queasy. Some poor students still don't know how to hone their *logos* with *about-ness*.

Well, perhaps Harcourt Brace has been having a bad decade since it started publishing *Readings for Writers*. With some confidence I turned to *Macmillan Handbook of English*, which is over



forty years old and hence one of my peers. But it has been spruced up. It was all right until I got to page seven.

> Precision and clarity are the primary requirements of effective writing, and weaknesses here are most vulnerable to attack from casual readers and instructors.

This means, I take it, do as we say, not as we do. It's those casual readers and instructors who are always out to get you.

All goes well again until page ten. "No doubt you have experienced the sense of dismay with which ideas tumble out of your head when someone mentions topics like abortion. . ." Frankly, when ideas tumble out of my head they don't seem dismayed at all. They are glad to get loose. I am the one who is dismayed, and the thing that dismays me is a grossly misplaced modifier on the printed page of an English book.

> It is of course quite possible for communication to function, as it were, on a single plane without degrees of structural emphasis.

How many degrees does structural emphasis usually have?

Maybe that's what I long for—communication to function, as it were. Not that I'm an impractical idealist or a mossback intellectual snob. Sometimes I dream of wangling my way onto teams that write new improved *math* textbooks for college students. I think I could write math textbooks that have as little precision as some of our present English textbooks. The results might seem innovative or liberating to people who don't care about math. And a decline in the dependability and accuracy of math instruction might make our English instruction look better.

In the long run, though, I think the low quality of English textbooks is bound to come to the attention of high-quality publishers ready to fill our need. In ten years we will probably have excellent texts again. We'll import them from Japan.

PAIRED COURSES

(Continued from Page 8)

as the one in which we asked our students to compare and contrast Aristotle and Hobbes—their milieus, their views of human nature, and the types of government each advocated. The well-considered papers that came from this assignment impressed me; our students were creative, they applied critical thinking skills, and they competently handled that rhetorical mode, comparison/contrast, which most of us in the composition courses teach. Because all of the students had read the materials that produced the content for this assignment, organization suggestions could be specifically directed and yet varying interpretations of the content could be discussed as the individual scholar-writer's prerogative and obligation. These are valuable concepts not always evident to the student in a traditional composition course. And unlike those contrived topics which many of us assign, like Prom Night or Tropical Fish Keeping, which are dependent on student experience rather than research, the Aristotle/Hobbes assignment taught our students the process for gathering information, thinking, organizing, and writing that they will need in order to produce meaningful academic papers in their other college courses.

If the instructors of those other college courses can be convinced that writing projects—especially short, easily graded papers—will increase student involvement in the course's content, we in the English Department will not appear preoccupied with peculiar, estoric, and elitist goals separate from those of other

disciplines and real life. Cross-discipline courses stand as dramatic testimony that good thinking and good writing are integrated activities. I enthusiastically encourage other composition instructors to expand their courses to incorporate the wisdom and perspective of another discipline. The paired content/composition course is one productive way to encourage campus interest in writing as a vital activity for all disciplines.

ENGLISH COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA ECCTYC TWO-YEAR COLLEGES

inside english

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INSIDE

inside english

ECCTYC Looks at Literature And the Community Colleges

Using E.E. Cummings' "since feeling is first" proves an effective way of enriching "the teaching of composition as well as of literature." Page 3

A poem printed in *i.e.* stimulated the famous critic Chon Jiardi to explore its texture and meaning. Page 3

Teaching literature to community college students has its challenges as well as its frustrations, but it also has its rewards. Page 4

Creating commercials about Caliban, printing recruiting posters for Henry Bolingbroke—dare we spoof the Bard? "You bet," claims one instructor, for in making "Shakespeare stoop . . . he eventually conquers. . ." Page 5

Many instructors believe that literature does not belong in a composition classroom. One instructor, however, supplies a rationale for putting it there. Page 6

Suggestions for two new columns—one for writing centers and one for teaching plans. Pages 4, 6

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LITERATURE CLASSES AT THE COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Teaching Lit in the Eighties: Go With the Flow?

by **MELINDA BARTH**
El Camino College

When I teach literature I feel I'm in a perfect position to appreciate, with my students, those qualities of art and humanity which transcend cultural, economic, and generational differences. The class and I unite to observe the writer's skills in crafting. We applaud the well-chosen word and the perfect, reverberating image. We share delight in the ironies and ponder, together, the complex themes. Literature is a unifying medium, also, in that no matter what the diversity of my community college classroom—Punk, Preppie, or Senior Citizen—everyone has always agreed on those traits of character which insist we find Rappaccini and Iago sinister and Beatrice and Desdemona good—maybe a little too good.
good.

Recently, however, I used W.H. Auden's poem "The Unknown Citizen" to create some classroom unity in a composition course and to prompt what I thought would be a straightforward writing assignment. I didn't get what I expected. A generational and value split ensued, and the only unity I achieved was in the students' uniting against me. The experience compelled me to take a look at the culture outside the academic and economically secure community in which I live and to try to understand the pre-university-eligible students I teach, and the literature I teach, from a different perspective.

Auden's poem was written in 1940 as satirical characterization of modern man's compliance with social expectations. At the university I attended in the early sixties, we were all amused by Auden's satire. We sneered at his character's statistical conformity and disparaged and feared his apparent acceptance of all government policy.

Imagine my surprise to discover, twenty years later, that I am teaching the poem to students who are equally united in their *approval* of Auden's man. Their approval frustrates me because it counters my notion of literature as a universal, value-confirming medium, and their response depresses me because it suggests that Auden's character does not stand as a negative model whom all citizens in a democracy will at all times deplore. My students' approval of Auden's citizen may reflect some disconcerting changes in our culture and changes we may expect to see in response to literature in our classes.

Auden presents his citizen as one who served the "Greater Community" throughout his life. He was a model worker, a man who "satisfied his employers" and worked consistently until he retired. The union he belonged to was "sound," the governemnt decided, and the man "wasn't a scab or odd in his views."

Auden's citizen also fulfilled his culture's expectations in consumer habits. He used the installment program to purchase "a phonograph, a radio, a car and a frigidaire," items Auden ironically describes as "everything necessary to the Modern Man." He had a wife and five children—the "right number" according to his generation's eugenist. Auden's citizen satisfied the press by buying a daily paper, and his responses to advertisements were considered "normal in every way." Finally, this man held the proper opinions: "When there was peace, he was for peace; when there was war, he went." Clearly, Auden builds an ironic monument to a statistically sound, bland citizen immortalized by his government with a marble statue to celebrate his concurring with their system.

In the 60's we hooted at JS/07/M/378, the unknown citizen for whom the Bureau of Statistics assured there were "no official complaints." Auden's man was, for us, anathema—an evil model of banality we could not respect and would never want to be.

THIS IS MY REPORT ON THE IMPORTANCE OF KNOWING HOW TO READ...
IF YOU CAN'T READ, AND YOU GET A LOVE LETTER, YOU WON'T KNOW WHAT IT SAYS..
THAT WOULD BE VERY SAD...
ALTHOUGH, IN THE LONG RUN, IT ALSO COULD SAVE YOU A LOT OF TROUBLE...
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3-30
SCHULZ

Many of us avoided sterile employment and sought challenging, satisfying jobs. Our sensibilities alerted by revelations in the psychology of advertising—hidden persuaders no longer hidden—we were cynical consumers who rejected many of the trappings of our parents' America. In the spirit of Thoreau, some of us planted bean fields and baked grainy breads. Some of us

(Continued on Page 10)

ENGLISH COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA TWO-YEAR COLLEGES
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Letters

Dear Editor

PAIRED COURSES

Combining courses as a WAC tactic is mentioned several times in your latest [October] *i.e.* Connie Missimer's interpretations [p.3] is least within reach of most of us, I think. By teaching all three courses herself, she sets an example many cannot follow.

Melinda Barth's example of pairing up with LaVonne Nelson offers a more possible model—an English and a subject-matter teacher sharing the same students. In her article, Ms. Barth says, "Our deans . . . worked to assure appropriate scheduling of our sections" [p.8].

Happy lady! Many of us would like to have such deans. Unfortunately, at many community colleges the deans would come up against the obstacle of the registration procedure itself. At our college we encourage self-programming, a procedure where thousands of students take their proposed schedules and their money to a few clerks who spend a moment with each one. This procedure, modelled after the game of pinball, makes it impossible for us to influence the student's choice of *combinations* of courses. (I would like to know the number of students enrolled in Ms. Barth's English 1A class.)

If anyone knows how a computerized (that is, impersonal) registration process can be adapted to facilitate the registration of students into paired courses, I would love to hear from them.

JANICE ALBERT
WAC Coordinator
Chabot College

NICE TO HEAR

. . . I like your journal. It's an interesting and casual way to keep in touch.

SUSAN HECHT
Saddleback College
Orange Coast College

. . . I am a fan of *i.e.* and find something of immediate value and interest in each issue.

SARA M. WATERS
Palomar College
San Diego Mesa College

Notices

INTERIM REVIVED

15 December 1985. Deadline for submissions of poetry to *Interim*. The journal will resume publication in spring 1986. Send submissions to A. Wilber Stevens, English Department, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, NV 89154. Single issues are available for $3; subscriptions are $5 for a year for individuals, $8 for libraries.

MLA ANNUAL CONVENTION

27-30 December 1985. Annual Convention of the Modern Language Association. Chicago, Illinois. For information contact Convention Manager, MLA, 62 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011.

CALL FOR PAPERS

10 January 1986. Deadline for submission of articles to *The Forum*, the journal of the Academic Senate. Articles should take positions on issues of major concern to the California community colleges and should be from 1500 to 2000 words long. Send submissions accompanied by address and phone number to Susan Petit, College of San Mateo, 1700 West Hillsdale Boulevard, San Mateo, CA 94402.

CATE '86

20-23 February 1986. Annual Convention of the California Association of Teachers of English. Oakland Convention Center. Conference theme: "The Composition in Which We Live." Convention speakers include humorist and humanist Steve Allen, sci-fi author Ray Bradbury, scholar and folklorist Allen Dundes, 1985 Pulitzer Prize winning poet Carolyn Kizer. For information write Joan Brown, 24 Dos Encinas, Orinda, CA 94563 or Karen Roemer, 3146 Bali Lane, Alameda, CA 94501.

TWENTIETH-CENTURY LITERATURE

26-28 February. Fourteenth Annual Twentieth-Century Literature Conference. University of Louisville, Louisville, Kentucky. Conference theme: "Literature and the Other Arts." Convention keynote speakers: poet John Ashbery and distinguished professor of French and Comparative Literature Mary Ann Caws. For information write Elizabeth B. Clay, Conference Chair, Department of Classical and Modern Languages, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY 40292.

OHIO SHAKESPEARE CONFERENCE

27 February - 1 March. Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio. Conference theme: "Fact into Fiction: Shakespeare and the Uses of History in the Renaissance." For information write Robert C. Jones, Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Ohio State University, 230 W. 17th Avenue, Columbus, OH 43210.

SHAKESPEARE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

27-29 March. Montreal, Quebec. For information write Ann Jennalie Cook, 6328 Vanderbilt Station B, Nashville, TN 37235.

WHIM CONFERENCE

29 March - 1 April. Annual Conference of Western Humor and Irony Membership. Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona. For information write Don L.F. Nilsen, English Department, Arizona State University, Tempe AZ 85287.

JEFFERS CENTENNIAL

1 November 1986. Deadline for submissions to the *American Poetry* special issue (fall 1987) commemorating the centennial of Robinson Jeffers' birth. The submissions should address the question of Jeffers' place in the canon. Critical essays, notes, and documents (25-page maximum) are welcome. Send copies of completed manuscripts to Tim Hunt, English Department, Indiana University/Purdue University, Fort Wayne, IN 46805 and to Jeffers Issue, *American Poetry*, English Department, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM 87131.

LESSONS IN COMPOSITION

Sondra J. Stang and Robert Wiltenburg (English Department, Washington University, St. Louis, MO 63130) are editing a **collection of lessons in English composition**. They would appreciate hearing from teachers about lessons they have used successfully in the classroom and especially about lessons that have led to exceptionally productive writing assignments. The collection will be published by Random House.

LITERARY SEMANTICS

Persons interested in forming an **international association for the study of literary semantics** should write to Trevor Eaton, Editor, *Journal of Literary Semantics*, Honeywood Cottage, 35 Seaton Avenue, Hythe, Kent CT21 5HH, England.

MARGARET ATWOOD SOCIETY

The Margaret Atwood Society was founded in 1983 in New York. The society publishes a newsletter and sponsors sessions at professional conferences. For further information write Sharon R. Wilson, English Department, University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, CO 80639.

inside english DEADLINES
MARCH 1986
Transfer Issue
24 January 1986
MAY 1986
Writing Issue
5 April 1986

HEART ATTITUDES AND HEAD NOTIONS

Cummings on Composition

by JACK GILL
College of San Mateo

since feeling is first
who pays any attention
to the syntax of things
will never wholly kiss you!

wholly to be a fool
while Spring is in the world

my blood approves,
and kisses are a better fate
than wisdom
lady i swear by all flowers. Don't
cry
—the best gesture of my brain is
less than
your eyelids' flutter which says

we are for each other: then
laugh, leaning back in my arms
for life's not a paragraph

and death i think is no parenthesis

With its provocative metaphoric infrastructure ("syntax," "paragraph," "parenthesis"), E.E. Cummings's "since feeling is first" can enrich the teaching of composition as well as of literature.

In class discussion of this poem we note immediately that the thesis of the poem is that feeling is more significant than reasoning (or "down with thinking. Vive feeling," as Cummings wrote elsewhere, or, again, "only love immortally occurs beyond the mind"). This thesis is constructed on the sharp antithesis between the "heart" attitude of the lover "i" and the "head" notions of one "who pays attention to the syntax of things." "Logic," Cummings argues

elsewhere, has too often "thwarted life" for this latter "head" kind of person. Thus, kissing "wholly" is feeling; paying "attention to the syntax of things" is thinking, is being logical and pragmatic and cerebral, is not being completely enough committed to feeling to be a complete lover.

At this point in teaching the poem, there are ample opportunities for a significant discussion of the grammatical term "syntax." The point, clearly, is not to denigrate grammatical syntax but to utilize the poet's metaphoric use of the word to expand and enrich our composition class discussion of the concept.

Two points are crucial. The first is that Cummings is not evaluating grammatical syntax at all; his metaphor is "the syntax of things," which means being unduly rational and logical about life. When one faces a crucial life decision, Cummings vigorously advises a "heart" rather than a "head" choice. But in discussing with our composition classes the appropriateness of the metaphor in the context of the poem, we must analyze the concept of "syntax" itself. And this analysis of the connected and orderly and reasoning language system that is syntax can move our classes to fuller understanding of such matters as sentence combining and sentence arranging, all the elements of conscious and planned discourse.

For example, the etymology of "syntax" is illuminating here. Related to "tactics," it stems from the Greek word meaning to arrange troops for battle as a general would. The cogitation and practicality involved are obviously crucial for any general who wants to win the battle as well as for any students

(we teachers pray) who want to write intelligently.

This brings us to the second crucial point: syntax alone is not enough. Syntax is, as it were, a given: good writers use it as they use the air they breathe. We demand good syntax and we travail to obtain it, just as we demand good air and travel to obtain it—but we also demand much more for the total quality of life and of writing.

Thus the lover "who pays any attention/to the syntax of things" is only a partial, incomplete lover and reminds us of the student who uses perfect syntax—but who can't write. Put another

(Continued on Page 6)

"Stopping By Eyes"— The Way to the Poem

by CHON JIARDI

Imagine my pleasure the other day as I came upon a critical piece by poet and critic Chon Jiardi and realized its subject matter was my own poem "Stopping by Eyes," published in inside english *[May 1985, p. 8]. Natural modesty fails me, and I must share it with the literary world. What follows is Jiardi's original text.—H. Wendell Smith.*

Though there is much talk about poetry, little is said about specific poems. Indeed, there are so few specific poems. But now comes one that manages to be specific without giving up that universality of which every good poem is made. First, the poem itself:

STOPPING BY EYES

Whose eyes are those I'd like to know.
Her thoughts are on her math book
though.
She will not see me stop to stare
Nor hear my tripping heartbeat go.
Still of my glance she's unaware
As sunlight dances on her hair.
She and Euclid seem so smug;
Shall I speak now, or do I dare?

My spirit gives my bell a tug
As if to say, "Foolhardy lug!"
If she looks up, your goose is cooked!
Run now, before she pulls the plug."

Those eyes should not be overlooked,
But I have dates already booked
And years to go before I'm hooked.
Well, days to go before I'm hooked.

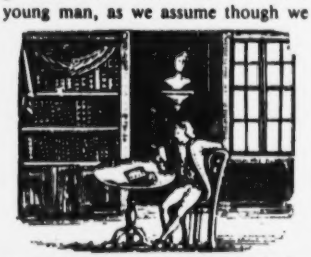
—H. Wendell Smith

The author—perhaps the thousandth reader need to be told—is unknown. Yet, by echoing the pattern of thought and delightfully pursuing the rhyme scheme of Robert Frost's "Stopping by Woods," the best-known poem by an American poet, Smith has linked his achievement to the ultimate.

Yes, it is a parody, but not such a parody as ridicules its original. This one pays reverential acknowledgement to Frost while showing that the "Woods" poem is all the more superb for its being applicable to the everyday experience of a younger man, in a sense a babe who has never been, really, to the woods.

The poem begins as a simple incident. But there is duplicity here: The poet pretends to talk only of that joyful moment of looking upon two wondrous eyes, and all the while he is talking about the tug of the life force, the lure of the infinite. The incident is a metaphor.

Like Frost's poem, this one is a progression in three scenes. In scene one a young man, as we assume though we



are not told, sits at a study table in the college library. One-third of his mind is on study, the other two-thirds where the mind of every young man is. His glance roves about the table and is instantly tripped by lovely eyes focused on a math book.

Why are we not told the young man's errand? Nothing is said of his own studying; not even the library is mentioned. Why? In this omission we recognize the interplay of specific and general. The young man could be anywhere. All of us, then, not just college students, become part of the poem.

Frost's narrator, in the woods, says whose woods they are "I *think* I know." Smith's narrator, less self-assured, says only whose eyes those are "I'd *like* to know." How we are drawn to this simple difference!

Seeing that "she and Euclid seem so smug," the young narrator asks himself, "Shall I speak now, or do I dare?" With this superbly allusive line we are taken to that garden below Juliet's balcony, where we hear Romeo asking, "Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this?" But Smith's young Romeo has yet another dimension, for we see Prufrock, fussing over his coffee spoon and wondering, "Do I dare/Disturb the universe?" Where else in all poetry and drama have we such a swift and understated melding of the impetuous Romeo and the inhibited Prufrock?

In scene two, as in Frost's poem, a foil is introduced, something in conflict with the narrator's mood. Why has he been arrested by the beauty of the scene? In the woods, the narrator's "little horse" gives his harness bells a shake. In the library the young man's "spirit gives my bell a tug." In this change we recognize a splendid stroke, at once bold and delicate. Smith, his poetic sense at the top of form, knows instinctively that a horse will not do in the college library. And since Frost's horse was but a symbol for the life force, Smith "goes for it," by-passing symbol and driving directly to the point: Spirit. The spirit, horse or not, forces the question: Why did the young man stop to watch these eyes fill up with math? Is the act not dangerous? Has

(Continued on Page 5)

LITERATURE'S REWARD

Making Order out of Chaos

by JOYCE LIPKIS
Santa Monica College

The challenges as well as the frustrations in teaching literature to community college students are numerous, but so are the rewards. Stimulating interest in individuals who are essentially non-readers is especially challenging, particularly when to students the works seem esoteric and complex; discovering how few students have any frame of reference, any real awareness of the literary or other allusions intrinsic to discerning the underlying meaning of a work, is frustrating. Stirring the imagination of students so that they can read creatively and participate actively in the recreation of a work is also challenging *and* frustrating because of their TV-engendered passivity which negates involvement. On the other hand, when the rewards finally appear, these frustrations disappear—at least temporarily. There is nothing quite comparable to that special excitement accompanying the dawning of the student's awareness of the wonderful world of literature.

As I think back on the literature courses I have taught over the past seventeen years, it seems incredible that I did so many preparations, so much research: innumerable hours spent on Introduction to Literature (English 2); on survey courses in both English and American literature; on individual courses concentrating on the works of Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner, F. Scott Fitzgerald, John Fowles, and Virgina Woolf; on developing the courses Images of Women in Literature (English 39) and Literature of the Absurd (English 38). In my personal "remembrance of things past," I am reminded of the great changes in the intellectual as well as the reading capacity of so many students during this relatively short period of time. When I recall, for example, that only ten years ago I not only taught short stories, poetry, drama, and film in my English 2 classes,

but I also required John Fowles' *The Magus* and Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*, I am astounded not only at my audacity in assigning and expecting so much, but even more at my students' success. But, then, some of my colleagues agree with those students who complain that my expectations are *still* unrealistic for the community college level. Of all of the courses I have taught, however, the ones that have had the greatest lasting impact on my students are English 39 and English 38. And it follows that my own greatest satisfactions and frustrations have emanated from these courses.

The course on Images of Women in Literature includes short stories, novels, and some poetry—all by and about women. Deliberately, no prerequisites were established for this course, which came into being when Santa Monica College initiated a program for women returning to education. As a result, the class makeup is heterogeneous (except for gender, which has been for the most part exclusively female) in age, marital status, education, reading and writing backgrounds, and ethnic origins. My syllabi run the gamut of writers: Jane Austen, the Bronte sisters, Kate Chopin, Willa Cather, Edith Wharton, Colette, Sappho, Emily Dickinson, Sylvia Plath, Anne Sexton, and such contemporary authors as Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, May Sarton,

Margaret Drabble, Margaret Atwood, Gail Godwin, Erica Jong, and Adrienne Rich, some of the reading being changed each semester. The format is lecture/discussion, with pop quizzes and assigned papers and essay examinations. Although the demand for this course has diminished somewhat, reflecting what seems to be waning interest in Women's Studies per se, the experience of the members of the classes remains a wonderfully rewarding one.

A number of exciting aspects of English 39 come to mind. Discussion is almost immediately lively, with spirited interaction occurring between the generations. None of the beginning reluctance to exchange ideas that I often encounter in other classes occurs here. Through interpretation of the readings and analysis of the situations of the characters encountered, a wonderful sharing of ideas and varying responses ensues. This has engendered not only better understanding of the fictive situations, but also the realization that art does imitate life and has indeed done so through the ages. In fact, invariably, some very meaningful personal "awakenings" and newfound self-awarenesses are stimulated. Coupled

with this unique personal response to Images of Women in Literature, and even more exciting and rewarding to me as teacher, is the evident improvement in analytical reading of the literature and in essay-writing ability. Often students have summoned the courage to take my English 1 course *after* completing English 39, having lost their fear of failure and developed a measure of self-confidence. Invariably, they prove to be quite successful in English 1 too. Finally, when students request that this become a two-semester course because they have enjoyed the one semester so much, what instructor would not feel gratified?

On the other hand, teaching Literature of the Absurd has been an entirely different experience. I designed this course several years ago, hoping to arouse some hitherto perhaps latent interest in literature. The first semester that goal was accomplished beyond my wildest expectations. More than sixty students registered for that opening session, with many additional people clamoring to be added. It was standing-room only in the classroom. This phenomenon had not occurred during the recent period of waning interest in things literary. Naturally, I was delighted and excited and challenged. But my spirits were somewhat dampened when I discovered that a number of those enrolled had little or no conception of what they had signed up for; they merely were intrigued by the course's title. In fact, one of my students told me she had heard several of my former students discussing this new course when one asked, "Are you going to sign up for Joyce's new 'silly lit' course?" Obviously, she had not seen the syllabus; with such authors as Camus, Kafka, Melville, Beckett, Ionesco, Pirandello, Barth, Vonnegut, and others of that ilk included, "silly lit" was hardly an apt label. By the time some of these neophytes discovered what Absurdity really was about, the size of the class had settled down to a more manageable—though still quite large—number.

My ultimate goal in this course is to teach the students to comprehend Absurdity as defined by Albert Camus in his *Myth of Sisyphus and Other Essays* and recognize it not only in literature but also in their quotidian world, which does more and more seem to reflect these elements of the Absurd and the overwhelming discrepancy between appearance and reality. The challenge is two-fold: not only is the reading somewhat esoteric, but the philosophy is enigmatic to all but those few who have had some background in existential thought. Thus, I find it necessary to remind the class continually that no one is required to agree with views encompassed in the readings and also that it

(Continued on Page 6)

PROPOSED NEW COLUMN: INSIDE THE WRITING CENTER

Are you, like me, wondering what is happening at community college writing centers? If you are at all associated with or affected by your college's center, you will want to participate in a new *inside english* column that will put your center in the news.

Entitled "outside english/inside the writing center," this column will consist of articles written by you about your writing tutorial centers. Imagine a newsletter inside *inside english* that will give everyone—lab and classroom instructors, tutors, and administrators—a chance to inquire and respond.

Topics are up to you. The following "prewriting" questions come to mind:

- What new programs are you attempting to start?
- What type of tutor training program do you have?
- Are you receiving ADA for drop-in tutoring? Is this program cost-effective?
- Do you have a Writing-Across-the-Curriculum program?
- Are you an instructor who encourages or discourages students to visit the center? Why?
- What role is your center taking in formulating a writing program for your college?
- Is the smooth operation of a writing center dependent upon departmental agreement on the concepts of writing?

To submit an article, please follow the standard guidelines outlined in *inside english*, but send your material to Barbara Budrovich, Editor, "outside english," Humanities Division, El Camino College, 16007 Crenshaw Blvd., Torrance, CA 90506.

Our first column will run in the March issue; the deadline is Friday, 24 January. So pick up your pen or slip in your disks now. I am—as you must be—excited about this new venture. We all have a lot to say!

LAUGHTER AND LITERACY

Shakespeare Stoops to Conquer

by LLOYD THOMAS
Los Angeles Mission College

E.D. Hirsch's idea of "cultural literacy"—of a shared body of literary and imaginative experience which all members of a society must share if they are to function as civilized citizens—helps explain why Shakespeare was so popular in his own day. Raised on the medieval morality

and mystery plays, familiar with the witty Senecan villains who starred in the works of Thomas Kyd and Christopher Marlowe, acquainted with the parables and poetry of the Bible, the Elizabethans shared and possessed a true "cultural literacy." Whether the groundlings who flocked to The Curtain, The Rose, or The Globe could read or not, they were probably a much more sophisticated theatre audience than those of us who patronize today's expensive metropolitan theatres.

For our students, of course, it's even worse. They share no such common bond of literacy and imaginative experience. Yet they are intimately familiar with the world of television commercials, newspaper and magazine ads, and pop-hype marketing schemes. I believe teachers can use the rhetorical formats of the ad, the commercial, and the sophisticated marketing campaign to help students understand the world and the wonder of Shakespeare's plays. After all, don't we all secretly sense that television commercials are devised by witty Senecan villains anyway? Like Iago serenading Roderigo, today's advertising executives are only interested in stealing our purses.

In order to test my theories, I encourage students in my Shakespeare classes to write commercials about their favorite character. For instance, here's what Caliban would write if he were on contract to a large pharmaceutical company:

> When I'm afflicted with cramps and side stitches that hit like punches, when my nightmares bristle with urchins, and bees mistake my back for a honeycomb, I take ALCORAX, the non-aspirin pain remedy recommended by most alchemists. My master Prospero frequently plagues me with rheumatic joints, blisters, and fevers. These ills, together with a newly-found predeliction for getting drunk, mean that I need a quick, reliable pain remedy. Alcorax works!

Like an unscrupulous alchemist myself, I've freely mixed Shakespeare's phrases with the analgesic hyperbole which interrupts my students' (and my) favorite television shows. But when I set such a spoof before my students and encourage them to experiment with one of their own, they set to work with a mischievous glee, assimilating complex rhetorical techniques like irony and metaphor and exhibiting a flair for character analysis. Having made them Shakespeare's dramatic apprentices, I can go back later and explain to them what they've achieved, but I'm a firm believer that laughter and literacy must go hand in hand.

Shakespeare also provides abundant opportunities for today's students to ridicule our national obsession with lawyers. Here's a model I give my students when we study *Richard II*. I ask them to imagine young Bolingbroke doing an advertisement for a popular law firm.

> The exiled scion of Lancaster looks anxiously at his wife Mary Bohun and says, "My father

> Gaunt has just died and perfidious Richard has usurped the title, revenues, and lands appertaining to Lancaster." Mary asks, "Does this mean we could lose the duchy?" When Henry frowns in anguish, Mary continues, "Then maybe we should call Chancellor, Pettifogger, and Nitpicker—Medieval Probate Attorneys." *Voice-over from the announcer*: "Yes, whether it's a simple case of regal greed or an abstruse point of Salic Law, whether you're a Lord Appellant or Repellant, a plaintiff or a caitiff, whether you want to start a northern rebellion or stop

> one . . . call Chancellor, Pettifogger, and Nitpicker. They practice law the old-fashioned way: They spurn it!"

By translating Bolingbroke's plight into a legal dilemma with which they can sympathize, I've given my students a port of entry into the play. Unwilling to risk legal difficulties myself, I won't speculate whether Jacoby and Meyers would take Bolingbroke's case or not, but at least I've presented Lancaster's complaint in terms which my students can understand.

Now, I can guess what's running through your minds. Like Bolingbroke's son Prince Hal, at the end of the first act of *Henry IV*, you're probably objecting, "If all the year were playing holidays,/To sport would be as tedious as to work." So let me assure you that I do try to feed my students with more traditional academic fare in addition to these comic spoofs. But only after I've allowed my students the pleasure of translating Shakespeare's characters into their own terms, of dressing his blank verse Plantagenets in contemporary clothes and modern concepts. It's my way of letting Shakespeare stoop to conquer.

After all, Shakespeare's dramas are called *plays*. It was Ben Jonson who first had the audacity to call his dramas *works*. And though I love the man on this side idolatry, Ben's caustic, bitter, sometimes labored satires unfortunately

(Continued on Page 12)

"STOPPING BY EYES"

(Continued from Page 3)

not such a stopping led over and again to lifelong regret?

And then, another touch shows the poem's quality. "If she looks up, your goose is cooked." A lesser poet, fearing critical analysis, would have shunned the cliché. But Smith welcomes it as the young narrator's own idiom. And the abandon continues: "Run now before she pulls the plug." This second apt cliché clashes boldly, dramatically with the cooking of the goose. One pictures the girl glancing up, cooking the young man's goose, and stuffing it down the drain all in one bat of the eyelids, an instant of imagined dramatic action worthy of the greatest poetry of this genre.

But there is more: Scene three. Smith's narrator, like Frost's, recognizes duty and obligations. "I have dates already booked." His eye, though ever the rover, is not totally free. Our narrator recognizes his dilemma. If he yields to impulse, abandoning self-control, he yields to a force outside himself. This he chooses not to do—yet. He has, after all, "years to go" before he's hooked.

Here Smith reveals a still finer deftness. He does not allow the Frost poem, whose two final lines are merely repetitious, to lock the parody in. With uncanny insight, the young narrator in the library recognizes an ultimate fate. The "years" to go before he's hooked may never be realized, as he admits with a final, heart-tugging shrug: "Well, *days* to go before I'm hooked."

Thus this miraculous parody performs on the tight wire set before it by the revered Frost model, yet steps artfully off that wire toward a horizon just beyond. How does the poem mean? We answer, "Triumphantly." The years become days, as they do for all of us, and this delightful poem becomes a part of the understanding of the race forever.

NOTE: *Upon reading Jiardi's piece again, I am nagged by doubt. I had no idea as I wrote the poem that it would actually outdo Frost and step toward a horizon just beyond. That seems almost an exaggeration. Yet, I cannot believe the great critic would put me on. Posterity must decide.*

—H. Wendell Smith

H. Wendell Smith, freelancer who occasionally tilts at poetry, is emeritus professor of English at Santa Monica College. His Readable Writing: Revising for Style *was published by Wadsworth Publishing Company in 1985. Among his other works are* On Paper: A Course in College Writing, *(Wadsworth, 1975—now in third edition),* Elements of the Essay *(Wadsworth, 1979), and* The Belmont Reader *(due from Wadsworth in January 1986). Smith co-authored (with Arnold L. Lazarus)* A Glossary of Literature & Composition *(NCTE, 1983). In addition, his "Poems on Concrete" will appear in the* American Poetry Anthology *(1986).*

TO REACH THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS

A Rationale for Literature in the Composition Class

by SARA M. WALTERS
Palomar College
San Diego Mesa College

As a part-time English instructor looking for a contract position, I have recently received several community college job announcements for "Composition Teachers." At a job interview this summer when it was my turn to ask a question of the interviewing committee, I asked about this new (new to me at least) designation. They replied that since so few students are enrolling in literature classes today, a new instructor could not expect to teach a literature course—perhaps for five or ten years. I suppose they felt they were just being realistic, but their approach seems self-defeating.

At one college where I teach, only 20 per cent of the students taking the English placement exam qualify for freshman transfer-level composition. The other 80 per cent are channeled into either "remedial" composition (read "grammar") or "developmental" composition. The remedial student must pass his course with an "A" or "B" to enroll in the developmental course, which he must then pass with an "A" or "B" to be eligible for freshman composition, which in turn he must pass to receive an A.A. degree. Let's face it—after laboring through this system for three or four semesters, a student is not likely to opt for an elective English course; in fact, he has probably earned his two-year degree by now. So, we

must grab him while we have him.

One way to expose students to literature and possibly spark their interest in taking literature classes for pleasure is to offer a literature-based composition course as an alternative to the traditional essay-reader composition course. Such a course would require the same number of essays, fulfilling state transfer requirements, and could be based on a rhetorical modes approach if departmental philosophy dictates.

Many composition courses now require two texts, a reader and a rhetoric. I am suggesting that a literature text be substituted for the reader. After a discussion of particular rhetorical strategy, students can utilize this strategy to write about the literary selections they have read. For example, students who have studied comparison/contrast and have read *Oedipus Rex* and *Miss Julie* might be asked to compare Sophocles' notion of fate to Strindberg's. For instructors who prefer a thematic rather than a rhetorical approach to teaching composition, many literature texts include a thematically arranged table of contents.

I am aware that numerous English departments include one or two sections of Introduction to Literature or Advanced Composition that do essentially what I am suggesting here. But the point is that most of our students do not have either the leisure or the motivation to take these courses. If we get literature in at the required level, more teachers will have the opportunity to teach a subject they enjoy and more students will be exposed to works that will give them pleasure beyond the narrow confines of the classroom.

In the past I have found community college students to be quite receptive to literature when and if they are ever given a chance to read it in a composition class. While teaching a thematically oriented composition class, I once distributed a copy of Ambrose Bierce's "Coup de Grace" to my students in conjunction with a group of essays they had read on euthanasia. Not only did this short story elicit thoughtful arguments in support of or against the protagonist's mercy killing of his wounded comrade, but student evaluations at the end of the semester were typified by comments like; "Wish we had read more stories."

Of course, we all hope that, with changes in the secondary institutions, remediation will some day cease to be a major concern of community college English departments. But now when it is, indeed, our primary function, we must find a way to share our passion for literature with all of our students—not

just with those who already have an interest in literature and a writing background that gives them the leisure to take an elective literature course in a community college.

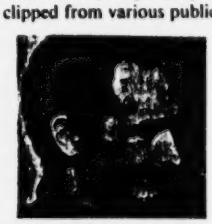
LITERATURE'S REWARD

(Continued from Page 4)

might take the entire semester for them really to grasp the full significance of this philosophy, which is one of hap-

piness. I reiterate to them that, nonetheless, the writings are intellectually stimulating, that their minds are constantly being challenged and their repertoire expanded, and, finally, is that not what education is about? As might be expected, however, some confusion and even conflicts invariably result, leading to provocative discussion among the more vocal, intelligent students blessed with inquiring minds. For some, these ideas even seem threatening to their peace of mind, their minds having been so insulated against critical thinking about anything—especially about the nature of reality, their own existence, and the philosophy of life. Those are "heavy" concepts that apparently transcend the intellectual capacity of many enrolled in the classes. Therein lies much of the challenge for me. Often concerned students ask what else can they read to find THE ANSWERS, THE MEANING. I tell them they will ultimately learn to find such answers themselves; that is, through the reading of the literature, analysis, and discussion will come enlightenment and ultimate awareness, albeit seemingly ephemeral at times. Then they, too, will recognize the meaninglessness in life and in literature.

Finally, a further gratifying aspect of teaching both Literature of the Absurd and Images of Women in Literature has been receiving the many communications from former students, sometimes several years later, telling of the tremendous impact these classes have had and continue to have on their college careers, on their capacity for handling personal crises, on their overall attitude towards life. Also, I repeatedly am sent items clipped from various publications



illustrating some aspect of the courses, as well as suggestions of books that would be relevant and of plays and films to see—all evidence of the enduring impact of English 38 and 39 on individual students. What greater reward can any teacher aspire to?

Yes, despite all the frustrations, I have very much enjoyed exposing students to the delights of good literature, always hoping that some of them will remain permanently addicted to reading. And, at semester's culmination when many of them eagerly request lists of books for further reading, I believe that this is possible. I am more than ever convinced that the study of this art form not only will expand the individual's literary horizons but that it will also in some measure help him or her to cope better with life, to make order out of the chaos of our twentieth century universe, in essence, to make their own meaning out of the seeming meaninglessness all about them.

—

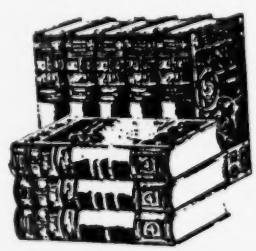
Joyce Lipkis has been teaching composition and literature to grateful students at Santa Monica College for seventeen years.

HEARTS AND HEADS

(Continued from Page 3)

way, "since feeling is first" relates conventional behavior in love to conventional use of mechanics. Conventional use of the tools of writing, such as syntax, does not in itself lead to heightened perception or immediacy or cogency or the flow of effective discourse.

Now "i" in the poem—who can, be it noted, write with vigor and charm—will undoubtedly be regarded as a "fool" by those "who pay any attention/to the syntax of things," but paradoxically "i" revels in being a "fool." To be a feeling person, a more complete individual, "my blood approves," he insists. The superiority of "blood" over



"brain"—this "my blood approves" as opposed to the scorned "gesture of my brain"—carries on the contentions of this lover, this self-styled, self-applauding "fool" who lives and loves more wholly because he can move

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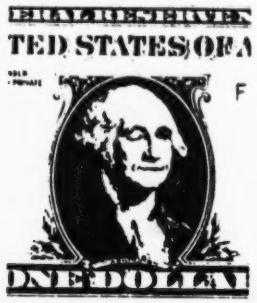
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

End-of-the-Year Catch-Up

Though I am writing this column in October, I know it will not get to you until December. I will, therefore, take this opportunity to wish you a very Happy Holiday Season and a wonderful New Year. We can all hope that 1986 will be a good year for community colleges, bringing us a fair share of the



higher education budget; providing necessary "catch-up money" for maintenance, equipment, salaries, and program development; ending the legislative practice of mandating new services without providing adequate funding for them; and initiating a climate in which community colleges are treated as equal professionals in establishing and enforcing articulation agreements.

A second event that will have occurred before this column finally gets to you is ECCTYC's Statewide Conference, held 21-23 November at the Clarion Hotel near the San Francisco Airport. So many officers and board members worked to make the conference outstanding that I cannot possibly acknowledge them all. However, I do want to single out Judy Markline (Allan Hancock College) and Bill Decker (College of the Sequoias) who served as program chairs, developing a program varied enough to appeal to the widest possible cross-section of English teachers. They did an admirable job!

As all of you should now know, a compromise has been struck between the University of California, Berkeley, and the Community College Chancellor's Office concerning the transfer of students who may have been unable to complete an "equivalent English 1A-B sequence" at the community college they attended. Though the compromise does not achieve all we could rightfully expect, at least it does mark a slight crack in Berkeley's arrogance. Berkeley has agreed to allow transferees who meet all other requirements to take English 1A-B under its auspices. Although this ruling does little to change our personal (and justified) attitudes towards Berkeley, at least we can take comfort in the fact that our students are offered necessary protection. I am sure this one compromise marks but the end of one skirmish with Berkeley and does not signal

the end of the war. The experience of those of us in the frontline of this battle is that Berkeley is unwilling to see us (community college instructors) as either capable or professional. Remember that Berkeley arbitrarily abrogated all existing articulation agreeements when it decided to redesign its English 1A-B sequence. What guarantee do we have that this current compromise will be any more sacred than the previous articulation agreements?

Since we so often complain about our lack of articulation with Berkeley, we must be careful that we don't act as Berkeley does. We must be careful to reach out to the high schools in our service areas, offering them whatever information, assistance, and expertise that we have. The Academic Senate has recently inaugurated a program of curriculum review that would bring community college personnel to the high schools to help them develop programs that meet the new state guidelines, implement and assess those program, and prepare for ensuing accreditation visits based on the new curriculum guidelines. This is a most worthwhile and exciting venture, one that we should all be eager to participate in and to help succeed. Find out more about this program and offer your services. This is a tailor-made opportunity to provide better articulation of English programs between high schools and community colleges.

In closing this column, I want to inform you of a recent change in personnel on the ECCTYC Board of Directors. Sunny Laub, who served as one of the directors in Region VIII, accepted an administrative post at Santa Barbara City College this summer. Once this new academic year began, an election was held in Region VIII to name her replacement. Robert Dees of Orange Coast College was elected, and he will join Lois Powers of Fullerton College in representing that region.

In closing, let me again extend to you ECCTYC's best wishes for a pleasant holiday and a spectacular New Year!

JIM CAGNACCI
City College of San Francisco

$ACRAMENTO $CENE

Lots of Activity . . .

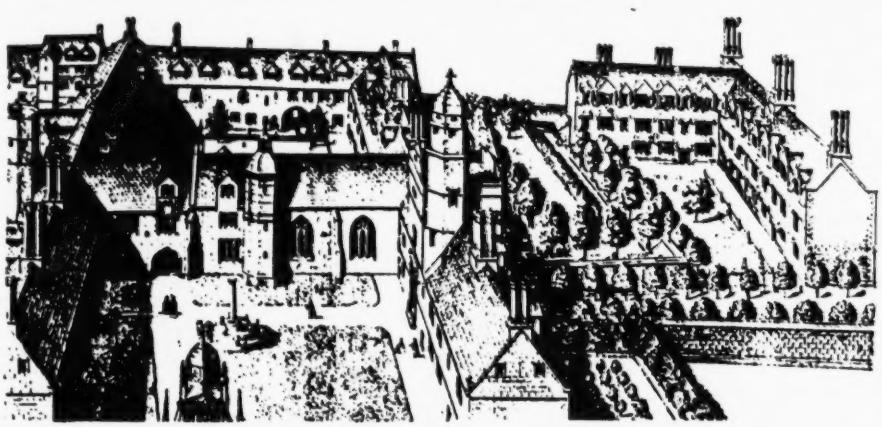
by GORDON TAYLOR
Yuba College

In the last report from Sacramento, I hinted that there might be some action in the fall. Well, there was none from the legislature: it began its Interim Study Recess on 13 September 1985 and will not reconvene until 6 January 1986. On the other hand, there is no dearth of activity. Commissions, committees, sub-committees, and organizations conduct hearings, have meetings, and hold conferences. These groups are considering (from the Latin *considerare*, originally, apparently, a term of augury, "to observe the stars carefully") interesting questions (as well as dross) whose outcome, while not directly related to English and composition, will affect what we do, will implicate the future. The statewide Academic Senate for the California Community Colleges (ASCCC), at its fall conference at the end of October, took up many of the current issues. As ECCTYC's liaison with the ASCCC, I attended the conference and will attempt to pick out the more important items and to summarize.

The new chancellor of the California Community Colleges, Joshua Smith, was one of the principal speakers; Bill Honig, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, was the other. Mr. Smith, new at the Community Colleges (CC's), is still working out what it is he is in charge of, but delivered to us a number of his impressions and laid out some challenges. He complained about the busy schedule he has followed the previous two months and about the numbers of times he has to answer similar questions. On governance: Is he a centralist? Does he believe in local control? He says that he is a Federalist and that, even though he is no Alexander Hamilton, he sees the same chaos in the community colleges as we saw under the Articles of Confederation. He wants us, in his words, to fashion a document that will institute domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare. He admitted to leaving out the ideas of establishing justice and securing the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity but did not explain his reasons. These are the challenges and proposals that he laid out:

. . . Not Much Action . . .

—Beginning in 1987, each college should "have devised a governance charter that outlines the participation of faculty and students and the governance of the institution." "The faculty ought to conduct the search for new faculty, full-time and part-time," and make recommendations to the president. The faculty ought to "conduct peer review evaluations of their colleagues from the very beginning" and "make recommendations for tenure to the administration," and the probationary period for new teachers should be lengthened to some period beyond the current two years and should be in a department not in the college.



—Credentials in specific subjects should be abolished. In their stead, the Board of Gover-

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News From Our Regions

REGION VII: NORTH LOS ANGELES

Directors: Jo Ray McCuen, Glendale Community College; Lloyd Thomas, Los Angeles Mission College.

The indefatigable Lloyd Thomas, director of community college English programs for the UCLA Office of Academic Interinstitutional Programs (OAIP), was named regional director for the California Literature Project for Northern Los Angeles and Ventura Counties. He participated in the summer California Literature Project, an intensive five-week institute at UCLA sponsored by the OAIP, in conjunction with the California State Department of Education. In addition, he joins twenty other teachers for this region to direct activities in junior and senior high schools to disseminate the use of the Model Curriculum Standards in English and Language Arts.

Instructors at Santa Monica College have been busy writing, publishing, creating new projects, and, of course, teaching.

Lyle Larson, whose book *Dr. Johnson's Household* received outstanding critical reviews, has completed a new work—*As Others Saw Them: Observations of Eminent Literary Figures by Their Contemporaries*.

Dick Dodge, one of the guiding lights of the UCLA Writing Project, will be taking forty students to England in February 1986 for a full-semester course of study in Shakespeare, British literature, and creative writing. He will be joined by theater arts instructor Adrienne Harrop.

Barbara Bilson, who edits *inside english*, is director of the new Santa Monica College Scholars Program—a program designed for transfer students with a 3.0 or better grade point average. The Scholars Program was developed in liaison with UCLA, Cal State Northridge, USC, Pepperdine, and Loyola-Marymount. Barbara

discussed the program at the FACCC mini-conference on transfer, chaired by **Connie Missimer** (Los Medanos College).

TO HIS COY EDITOR

Had I ideas enough, and time,
This coyness, editor, were no crime.
Thou by the Hudson would complain
While I in L.A. would feel no pain.
Two hundred years to every story
With hardly a thought of print or glory.
Unclear rejections wouldn't hurt.
And when you wrote, unexplained and curt,
"No thanks," "Sorry," "Please try again,"
I'd return to my desk with a cheerful grin
And write a new story full of wisdom and wit,
Then to the P.O. and again submit.

But at my back I always hear
A mess of adjectives hurrying near—
Ponderous, prodigal, profligate, old,
They cover my prose with moss and mold.
My receding hairline is emblem grim
Of faltering invention and fading vim,
But every line must be fought into shape,
Polished, cut, and dragged by the nape
Into order and meaning, free of dust,
Ready to rouse the editor's lust.
This writer's desk's no easy place
To sit and work without embrace.

Now therefore, before my youthful hue
Fades under stacks of paper and glue,
Before my writer's soul expires,
Witless, bereft of creative fires,
Now let me publish while I can.
Do not continue this lazy ban
On comments, suggestions—the editor's art.
It's that naked "no" that wounds the heart.
I seek an editor with wisdom to share,
Willing to comment, firm and fair.
If we share our strength, what a ball!
—And maybe I'll publish before next fall.

BERT WOODRUFF
Fresno City College, emeritus

HEARTS AND HEADS

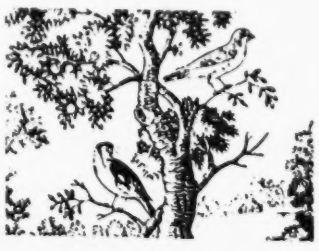
(Continued from Page 6)

beyond the "syntax of things." Part of the "syntax of things' would be, for example, that two times two is four. Rejecting that view Cummings entitles the volume in which this poem appear *Is 5*. Like the "fool" in his stance of "feeling is first," Cummings insists in the "Foreword" to *Is 5*: "Whereas non-makers content themselves with the merely undeniable fact that two times two is four, he [the poet] rejoices in a purely irresistible truth (to be found, in abbreviated costume, on the title page of the present volume)."

Here I pause in the discussion of the poem to note that Cummings puts feeling *first*, but this is not to say that he abandons reason or never follows syntax in his writing. He is, I insist, talking about a way of life, not about a way of writing as such. He does not say, "Don't use syntax"; this poem belies that. His own writing, vibrant as it is with feeling, is reasoned. It is syntactical, organized, coherent; it has accessible meaning. It violates some minor established canons in, for example, capitalization and punctuation (no commas around "lady" in direct address) but such deviations from the established "rules" can lead to pregnant class discussion. When Emerson insists that "Books are for the scholar's idle times," he is not saying, "Don't read." When Cummings preaches "feeling is first," he is not saying, "Don't think when you write." Cummings himself thought long, thought hard to express his emotions—with, it should be noted, syntax, paragraphs, and parentheses.

We also discuss Cummings's use of "are" in the line "we are for each other" to enhance the apperception and appreciation of effective word choice. Here a poet with a compelling and vigorous vocabulary (Cummings was a classics major at Harvard, and it shows!) uses a seemingly "weak" verb. But we can note the accumulated meanings the verb *are* garners here. We who are in love find, the line suggests, our "areness," our very being, in each other. Or as Cummings puts it in another poem:

what's wholly
marvelous my
Darling
is that you &
i are more than you
& i (be
ca
us
e It's we)



And in yet another poem Cummings insists that love makes the loving "me" of the poem "morethanme." "We are for each other," then, can lead to a moving discussion of vocabulary and semantics.

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LIT IN THE EIGHTIES

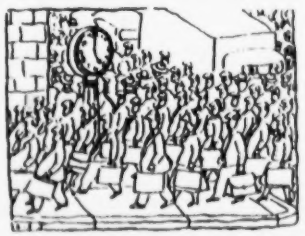
(Continued from Page 1)

boxed the wedding gift china and crafted our dishes. We became increasingly suspicious of the corrupting influences of affluence—beef, butter, and bourbon—which kill body as well as spirit. We turned from the formula of bridge-table talk to conversation, and we sought active leisure in cycling and wilderness hiking. We questioned the very givens of our culture and moved from drugged birth to LaMaze, from the bottle back to the breast. We boycotted discriminatory businesses and questioned our government's policies on the draft and on war. Auden's anonymous citizen served as an amusing model not only of all we rejected but also of what we feared would weaken the democracy: unquestioning conformity and citizen apathy.

But pre-university students in the mid-eighties, if my students are any indication, see Auden's man as truly fine. In fact, my students' papers showed they see Auden's citizen as one whose patterns everyone should want to emulate.

From their perspective, I learned, Auden's citizen was first of all productive and responsible. He had a job and never got fired. One young man wrote that JS/07 was the kind of worker who did everything right, so he probably "wouldn't even get laid off." Apparently, to young, imperfectly educated, and unskilled workers seeking fewer and more specialized jobs, a man able to keep *any* job, throughout life, is admirable and rare.

Auden's character had a wife and children, and however commonplace



the stable family pattern appears in literature, to my students it seems to suggest a mythic ideal many of them have never known in their own lives. The unknown citizen's life also may suggest escape from the quick pleasures of the singles-scene, a phenomenon of their generation increasingly deprecated in their essays, and a move to a secure, lasting commitment in family life.

That this citizen was a conforming contributor to the purchasing population is no less respected by my students. Have they missed Auden's irony in his description of gadgets as "everything necessary" to man? Not at all. They cheerfully acknowledge their many wants and in their papers laud the citizen who wants to fulfill his "obligations" to his family and society. Apparently, in the minds of my students, contributing to the Gross National Product and purchasing an American-made trash compactor is one of society's reasonable expectations for the citizenry.

I've tried to understand their perspective. Perhaps rejection of the material can only come from those who have the power to buy. Most of my students, in spite of the current administration's interpretation, are on the stocking side rather than the selecting side of those enticing stereo shelves, and stuff might look better when it's hard to get. I, a drop-out from the school of conspicuous consumption, know what I can't teach my students: gizmos need batteries, and silver needs insurance and polish.

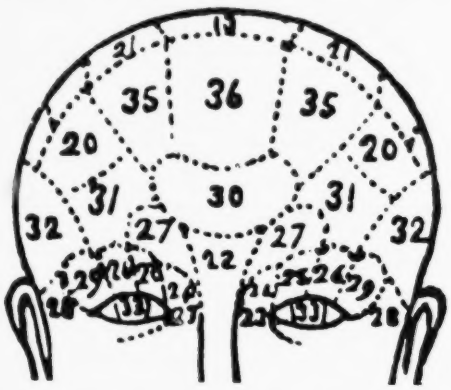
That advertisers have them pegged and that the government has them classified are not at all disturbing to my students. One girl wrote that with computer-records our government keeps the lid on the melting pot and thereby discourages our boiling over—a misperception of social psychology as much as physics, it seems to me. In short, these young people seem to think the statistically predictable, unknown citizen is ideal, that anonymity is an asset. What ironic twist in the last twenty years has reconditioned students' response? Why are we not united in our view of Auden's citizen?

A summer of pondering has prompted more questions and fears than answers. But perhaps an answer lies in the fact that these young people understand ironies from life rather than literature. Their *age* is ironic, and their models are not questioning or heroic individuals, the Naders and the Sagans, but quiet anti-heroes who kept "a low profile" a few years back and now, even more amorphous, "Go With the Flow." I think anonymity is an asset to my students because to them being unknown means no one's got anything on you.

I've tried to imagine what my students see. Auden's unknown citizen never troubled his government. And he probably never hurt his family or neighbors, either. That means he never lied under oath to federal investigators, and he never hijacked a plane. He never trafficked in cocaine to save his bankrupted whimsy, nor did he steal aerospace secrets to sell to the Russians. Maybe he never beat his wife. Surely he never molested children in a nursery school or opened fire on them in a school yard or while they were munching burgers in a McDonald's. I think my students see that the non-anonymous citizens of our all-too-frequent press-reports are anything but predictable, and their essays show they believe these citizens aren't "normal in every way."

Whereas in the sixties we deplored conformity because it reduced inquiry and denied individualism—thereby threatening the very essence of the democratic process—I think my students in the eighties see conformity as stability, which reduces chaos and quirkiness.

But who knows what's next? Maybe next semester my students will all find Updike's Sammy a foolish idealist for quitting his job for a principle. Maybe Babbitt will be a hero. Maybe Ahab will be dismissed after a few chapters as a kook who couldn't "kiss off" his quest, and maybe my students next semester will decide Harrison Bergeron *should* be shot down as a deviant for trying to kiss the ceiling.



At any rate, my students' almost unanimous approval of Auden's citizen suggests that interpreting character has more to do with the generational and socio-economic forces than I ever imagined. I'm not sure how optimistic to be about the future of democracy or of the literature class.

—

Melinda Barth teaches Freshman Composition and literature at El Camino College. Active on the Writing-Across-the-Curriculum Committee at El Camino, she designed a paired Freshman Comp/Philosophy course [see "The Whole Is Greater Than the Sum of Its Part," i.e., October 1985, p. 8].

HEARTS AND HEADS

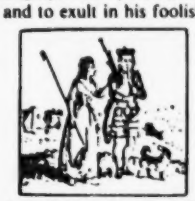
(Continued from Page 9)

The poem concludes with two precise comments also rich with potential for composition class discussion. The first is "life's not a paragraph." The whole function of paragraphs, their forms and

functions, can be drawn on here. The tragic sudden death of a young classmate can be a poignant reminder that life doesn't always seem to have coherence or meaningful transitions. Life is not one topic with topic sentence, developed with unity, coherence, and emphasis. Santayana spoke, for example, of "the variety, the unspeakable variety of possible life." Cummings is arguing, then, for a shifting, multi-faceted, changing meaning in life not an orderly, rational, unified single meaning—the development of a single topic sentence—that can be encapsulated in a paragraph. Life moves beyond; it is not a paragraph. Etymologically, "paragraph" means a marking off, a note placed in the margin beside the writing to indicate another start. Life, Cummings is telling us, is always a new start, a new meaning, a new topic sentence.

And, finally, we discuss: "And death i think is no parenthesis." For Cummings, death is not an afterthought: death is a part of life. Death is not outside the main stream of life, not shut off from life. As Cummings says in another poem, "dying is perfectly natural." Parentheses, of course, add depth and dimension to writing. Death is too integral to life, too much in the continuum of life, to be a parenthesis.

Thus a classroom hour of "since feeling is first" can open vistas for discussions on syntax and paragraphs and parenthesis, on composition and literature, and (who knows?) maybe on how wonderful it is to be a "fool." We lose the essence of Cummings's poem if we forget that even a "fool" needs syntax, paragraphs and parentheses to expresss and to exult in his foolishness.



Dr. Jack Gill teaches English at College of San Mateo and is ECCTYC liaison to the English Council of the California State Colleges and Universities.

SACRAMENTO SCENE

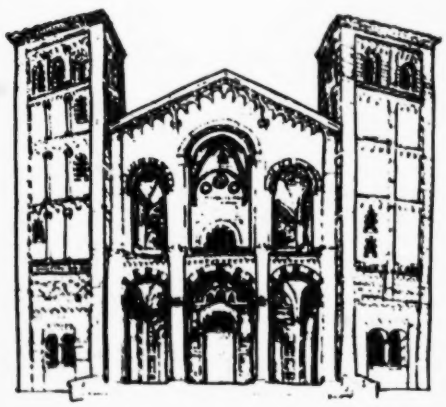
(Continued from Page 7)

nors (BG) should establish guidelines for a teacher's necessary qualifications to be administered at the local level, at the campus level by departments and academic senates.

—He would have departmental and college-wide curriculum committees that would propose, initiate, and design all new courses; establish specific committees on academic quality, conduct institutional research on student outcome, distribute its results college-wide, revise the curriculum based on the research. He believes that students do not have the right to fail, that be testing and counselling them we can put them all in their proper places.

In sum, he said that the faculty provides the permanence of the institution: the administrators come and go, but the faculty is stable and holds the institution together. The faculty should then take the initiative and be the professional body it is supposed to be.
be.

Bill Honig talked about a number of aspects of the K-12 system as well as the mutual relationship between the K-12 system and the CC's. The statistics are quite grim—California spends per student $170 less than the national average, $700 less that the top twenty-five industrial states, and $1900 less than New York; the K-12 schools will need 100,000 new teachers in the next five years—but these are not the major difficulties. He sees the schools failing at the task of educating their students: students need not only skills, but knowledge and understanding. In addition to getting jobs, they need to understand their governmental and civic obligations: the republican virtues, how our system works, and what makes it worthwhile—what he referred to as the inspirational aspects of education. Literature and history should be taught as a means of opening the students up to the culture and the implications that these studies provide. Literature and history, after all, do not exist in a vacuum in spite of what many people in the universities preach these days. They both are a result of the culture that produced their authors and, in turn, influence that same culture. All these items are a far cry from the supposed religious aspects of inspiration that the various media (not to say mediums) indicated Mr. Honig was after. By these, also, Mr. Honig does not intend to rigidify the system either: we need to define the common direction but allow the flexibility in the system that will keep the society together and allow individual and cultural variations.



These ideas also have serious and important implications for us at the CC's: we will, in effect, be teaching many of the future teachers, and, obviously, if we do not do our job, they will not be able to do theirs. Those who know neither their subject nor the value of it cannot pass these on to their students.

Mr. Honig speaks in plain language, untainted by the educational and institutional jargon and the jargonistic style of the professional educator. He has a lot of the optimist about him and engenders it in those who listen to him. If he succeeds in his endeavors, he will, indeed, have put the schools in California on a new course.

The ASCCC discussed the Review of the Master

Plan, now in full force, and credentials, governance, articulation with high schools and universities, associate degrees, and minorities, and, of course, passed resolutions. The Review of the Master Plan (MP), one way and another, includes all these issues, as well. Two separate but related groups are reviewing the MP: The Master Plan Review Commission (MPRC) and the Joint Legislative Master Plan Committee (JLC) to which the Commission will present its report in February or March 1986; both committees were established by the Legislature last fall and reported on in *i.e.* for October 1984. For some additional information, please refer, as well, to the October 1985 issue of *i.e.*.

The initial duty of both groups is to review and reassess the CC's. After they consider the reports on the CC's, they will then investigate issues relating to the California State University and the University of California and then try to set up a master plan that will define all three and establish their relationships with each other.

Lee R. Kershner, executive director of the MPRC, outline at some length the Commission's methods and activities to date. It is carrying out what might be called public brainstorming. It listed all the things that the CC's do, then listed all the options related to each of these things that anyone could think of, and then has held public hearings to try to find out which options people seem to prefer. The difficulties in this process are that these are only options to choose from, but many people take them as proposals, and many of them are unrealistic, unworkable, or appeal to special interests. One example: on the question of who gets into the CC's, Mr. Kershner named four mutually exclusive options: 1) open access to the school, to programs and courses; 2) open access to the school, selective access to programs and courses; 3) selective access to the school, open access to programs and courses; 4) selective access to everything. He said that the consensus is tending toward the second option. How the Commission can sort out the desires of all the people it listens to and come up with a coherent proposal is, no doubt, a mysterious process.

The current trend in the schools seems already toward something like option two. For us, that means, of course, we would need more teachers, more classes, smaller classes: all against the current attitudes on paying for the CC's.

Other topics of discussion include options for success—transfer, vocational education, the associate degree, remedial education, adult education; faculty and governance—part-timers, credentialing, tenure, salaries; financing the schools; etc., and the public hearings continue through January. Your local senate president should have a schedule of dates and places.

Brian Murphy, chief consultant to the JLC (John Vasconcellos is its chairman), took a quite different approach in his remarks. Apparently his group is following about the same procedure as the MPRC, but he thinks teachers and faculties ought to respond with a set of coherent overall principles and then find the means of putting the principles into practice. We would then have a more consistent system that would make sense to most people inside and outside. We should argue from an overall point of view, not waste time wrangling over individual options. What kind of governing system will allow us to do what we have to or want to do? The Legislature and the Governor would like to be able to look at a system that speaks with a consistent voice rather than what they get now: voices, often strident, from different, often conflicting, groups within the CC's. He says now is the time to be audacious; the faculty has a chance to influence the outcome if it is willing to take on the task. But we should build our proposals on a logical structure.

LAUGHTER AND LITERACY

(Continued from Page 5)

deserve the title of *works*. Furthermore, these little verbal masquerades in which my students participate actually camouflage rather traditional Shakespeare assignments. If I can steal a title from one of Shakespeare's Jacobean imitators, Phillip Massinger, this is a New Way to Play with Old Shakespeare assignments.

For instance, during our study of *Richard II*, instead of asking my students tocompare the medieval feudal code which dominates Richard's reign with today's corporate feuds, I let them spoof, an exercise such as the recruiting ad begins to persuade students that a commercial is really a soliloquy in words and pictures, and that Shakespeare's characters aren't the only ones being asked to "buy" dubious schemes or unnecessary products.

Let me pursue this connection between Richard II—or any Shakespeare history play—and the modern corporate climate just a bit further. I was pleasantly surprised a few months ago when I finally purchased a paperback copy of Peters and Waterman's *In Search of Excellence*. I had read only a few chapters when I realized that each

draft a recruiting poster for Bolingbroke's rebellion. I model my sample on an ad for Entre Computer Centers that was published in the *Los Angeles Times*, fortuitously enough, on the anniversary of Shakespeare's birth, 23 April 1985. The poster reads as follows:

> Agents of Henry Hereford, rightful Duke of Lancaster, are currently searching for a loyal band of knights willing to assist the exiled Duke in reclaiming his ancestral lands and rightful market share. This is an exceptional business opportunity. We require none but dynamic entrepreneurs, eager for swordplay and blood. Like Henry's father, time-honored John of Gaunt, we are a value-driven army, with a bias for action, autonomy, loyalty and law. Our chief competitor, Richard Plantagenet, has, through careless management, leased out our demi-paradise to the highest bidder. But Henry Bolingbroke has vowed to prune this sea-walled garden of England with steel. As for Bushy, Bagot, and Green, Bolingbroke will snare-all the caterpillars of this commonwealth. Using strategic market analysis, Henry has located his corporate recruiting headquarters at Ravenspur, in the duchy of his noble kinsman, the Duke of York. Those who would be brave and prosper, seek him there!"

At about this point, my students begin to sense that they, too, and not just the characters in Shakespeare's histories, are living in a world where competing language strategies vie for their allegiance. Though it is only a

of the hallmarks which they used to distinguish a thriving corporation could be applied (equally well) to a thriving Shakesperean monarch.

Then I remembered that Shakespeare had actually read an early version of Peters and Waterman's book, only it was called *The Mirror for Magistrates*, a collection of cautionary stanzas about devious dukes and profligate princes, which was immensely popular in the Renaissance. Let me discuss just two of the eight hallmarks which Peters and Waterman discovered in successfully run companies, and let me point out how Richard II lacks and Henry possesses each of them.

First: a bias for action. Richard, of course, procrastinates. He is the perfect example of "paralysis through analysis." Instead of deciding whether Mowbray or Bolingbroke is right, he

stalls, sets a date for a joust, then interrupts it, banishes both men, then arbitrarily reduces Bolingbroke's sentence. Either he should have rewarded Mowbray for doing Richard's dirty work (executing Thomas of Woodstock in Calais), or Richard should have eliminated him quickly and thus kept peace with the powerful house of Lancaster. Instead, Richard alienates the old-line English nobility who side with Gaunt and fails to reward those, like Mowbray, foolish enough to assist Richard. In contrast, Bolingbroke typifies a "hands-on, value-driven" leader. His motto could be "Ready, FIRE, aim." In other words, he creates his own opportunities; he doesn't wait for them to appear. Like a modern presidential candidate early in the race, Bolingbroke doesn't announce his ultimate plans prematurely, but once he has set foot at Ravenspur, after some preliminary circling to gather troops, he moves to seize the English throne like a falcon striking its prey.

Next: stay close to the customer. From the beginning of the play, Richard avows his distate for the common Englishman. In fact, he disparages Bolingbroke for being friendly with them:

> Ourself . . .
> Observed his courtship to the common people—
> How he did seem to dive into their hearts
> With humble and familiar courtesy
> What reverence he did throw away on slaves,
> Wooing poor craftsmen with the craft of smiles . . . (I. iv. 23-28)

Obviously, Richard's snide remarks highlight Bolingbroke's skill at public relations; the aspiring usurper carries himself with a princely panache, while the languishing monarch lacks all charisma. Bolingbroke may not be exactly *OF* the people, but he knows the value of being seen *AMONG* them.

These are just two of the ways in which Shakespeare anticipated today's sophisticated corporate management techniques. Students are quite impressed when they discover this.

Thus, while Shakespeare and his audience gained their "cultural literacy" through attending plays and listening to sermons, our students absorb their own "cultural literacy" through television advertising. Using humorous versions of these modern rhetorical formats, I let my students gain familiarity with Shakespeare's world. Before long, these same students are sufficiently versed in Shakespeare's world and values so that they can them as tools with which to understand tha apparent complexities of today's world. In fact, my students' modest Shakespearean spoofs are the first step in their discovery that the bard "was not of an age, but for all time." I do not apologize for appearing to make Shakespeare stoop at the beginning of the semester, because he eventually conquers—making students new citizens of his special imaginative world. And, after all, good actors always stoop—or, at least, bow—at the conclusin of a good play.

Lloyd Thomas, on leave from his position as an English instructor at Los Angeles Mission College, is the Coordinator of Community College Programs for UCLA's Office of Academic Interinstitutional Programs.

OVERALL TEACHING PLANS

NEW COLUMN?

Recently we received a letter from an instructor who needed to move and was seeking a position at another college. The application process gave her the idea for a new column—or series of articles—for *inside english*.

> One of the colleges, College of San Mateo, asks applicants for English instructor positions to respond to the following topic: "What teaching methods and textbooks or other instructional materials do you plan to use to help students achieve the writing competence they will need for the present and near future?" Upon first reading the topic, I thought, "Pretty dry." But writing my response proved to be a valuable exercise, one that helped me gain a clearer perspective on my "overall plan" in my writing classes.
>
> It occurred to me that I could gain, too, from reading the "overall plans" of my colleagues, and I'm wondering if *inside english* might request that writing teachers from all of the two-year colleges respond to the College of San Mateo's topic and then print one or two of the selected responses in several upcoming issues.

We like the idea. However, we would expand the topic to include literature teaching. Do *YOU* like the idea? For what happens now is up to you, *i.e.*'s readers. The first article—and what we hope will be the first in a long series of articles—in response to the topic will appear in the December 1985 issues of *i.e.* We look forward to receiving numerous articles on overall teaching plans for writing and literature courses.

Thanks to Cathy Hicks (Monterey Peninsula College) for a good idea.

ENGLISH COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA ECCTYC TWO YEAR COLLEGES

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INSIDE

inside english

ECCTYC
Looks at

Statewide Issues, Community College English Departments, and Transfer Courses

The many interesting sessions at ECCTYC's Fall 1985 Statewide Conference are summarized for those who were unable to attend. Pages 8 and 9

If enrollments in literature classes are low, try adding a WOLM to freshman composition classes. Page 3

The old notion of keeping literature out of freshman composition courses prevents the students from being able to use the best writers as models. Page 6

Not having taken the English Placement Test almost kept one instructor from receiving his B.A. Page 4

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CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES
A New Era of Renewal, Revival, and Renaissance

by JONNAH LAROCHE
Allan Hancock College

When I was invited to address the General Session of ECCTYC Fall 1985 Statewide Conference, I agreed readily because I figured I could just dust off a few topics from other speeches I have made; add a quote from Cardinal Newman and one from T.S. Eliot to demonstrate my literary expertise; throw in a biting oxymoron or two to draw a knowing chuckle; and then conclude with a cleverly constructed allegory about how the good, pure, honest, hardworking folks (us) will eventually triumph over the black-hatted doers of dastardly deeds (CPEC and the Legislature).

So I created several paragraphs, but when I read them, I realized that they were crammed with cant, and I was uncomfortable. I did not want to speak in jargon about overworked issues; so I cast aside my clever, safe speech and began to focus on some visions that have been floating foggily in the back of my brain.

To crystalize those foggy notions, I practiced what I preach—I did prewriting, mostly clustering but some freewriting—and discovered that what I most wanted to share is my vision that the community colleges are on the brink of a renaissance; that the darkest years are behind us, and that we stand at the dawning of an era of renewal, revival, and renaissance that we can help create. Therefore, let's consider three areas that will form the beginning of such a renaissance: preparation, purpose, and professionalism.

PREPARATION

If we are to enjoy the renaissance that I foresee, we must prepare for it by anticipating the economic, social, and demographic trends that have implication for community colleges.

We know from several studies that the employers in the changing marketplace will demand higher levels of education from their employees, implying a rise in enrollments at our colleges. In the next ten years, 46 percent of those new or replacement jobs will require education beyond the high school level, and employers will demand of their employees not only specific job skills but also critical thinking and language skills. Thus, we need to anticipate ways that English and humanities instructors can work with colleagues in occupational education to meet those needs, and we must proceed to do so in a collegial, mutually supportive way.

Predictions reveal that the population of California will double by the year 2000, reaching 32 million, and that 52 percent of that population will be "ethnic minorities." Hispanic and Asian populations will grow at ten times the rate of the white population. In addition, California will lead the nation in numbers of immigrants, about a quarter of a million of whom arrive annually from Pacific Rim countries. As a result, California's educational institutions, particularly K-12 and the community colleges, can be expected to supplement traditional educational functions with an "Ellis Island function—acting as socialization centers for new Americans." Community college educators need to prepare for these new populations by becoming increasingly sensitive to their cultures, ethics, and values. Furthermore, as educators we will need to make every possible effort to encourage the enrollment and success of these populations if we are to avoid a de facto educational, economic, and intellectual apartheid in our state. To allow such apartheid to occur would diminish everyone's future.

Also, I suggest that preparation for this new era should include examination of current curriculum and pedagogy, reaffirmation of techniques and content that work well, and exploration of new approaches and materials. For instance, as we experiment with new technologies such as WANDAH [see *inside english*, Oct. 1984, p.3], we may discover that we need to adjust our teaching methods in certain ways. In addition, we should become more knowledgeable about learning styles and teaching strategies under study at several graduate schools and explore how that research might enhance our classes.

Finally, we should continue to take advantage of faculty development activities, such as the Great Teachers Seminar and the various California Writing Projects, and we should expect and receive from our colleges and from the state fiscal support for such

(Continued on Page 13)

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Letters

DECEMBER ISSUE PRAISED

December's issue of *i.e.* is outstanding and fascinating. The writers are to be congratulated. The quality of writing itself is high and consistent throughout, and it is refreshing to read about people's ideas and what they think and what their reactions are. The good quality of the writing reflects the quality of the thinking even though in those thoughts one may find some points to argue and others even to quibble about, neither of which I wish to do here.

One or two questions, though, come to mind. I share Melinda Barth's frustration over her students' depressing reactions to Auden's poem. Would she get similar ones from the students at her university these twenty years later? Is the difference in the different kinds of students that go to our respective institutions? Or is it really a difference in the attitudes of the times? It is true, if memory serves, that in the sixties (and the fifties in many universities, for that matter) it was a sort of cliche of the times to see everything ironically; one might say the organizing principle of the life at school. There, we, pure of heart, saw conformity and hypocrisy everywhere. We only conformed to our own conformity.

Still, when I came to the community college a little over twenty years ago, many students had trouble seeing, let alone understanding, Auden's irony. It seems possible that ideas like his had not occurred to them, and, as we all know, many people need to get used to new ideas before they realize their meaning. I said I wasn't going to argue or quibble, and I don't mean these remarks to do either. I am more than likely falling into that old academic type who, under the pretense of asking a question, really wants to deliver the wisdom of the ages.

I had my wife read Lloyd Thomas's ideas on getting the students used to Shakespeare's language. She remarked that students, younger, young, or old need to play with a thing for a while before they can deal with it as a serious concept. She is currently teaching in an elementary school where the games the young kids play are designed to have them do things that get them used to certain concepts (without their really being aware) that they will have to understand consciously later on, an observation worth considering, perhaps, in other contexts, as well.

H. Wendell Smith's spoof of both Frost's poem and Clardi's analysis puts those tired, old warhorses into a much needed perspective.

What were the other questions I had? I've gone on so much that I've forgotten. They were probably not very important anyway. I really wanted to congratulate the writers and the editors for their fine work.

GORDON TAYLOR
Yuba College

BARTH'S IRONY

I enjoyed reading Melinda Barth's evocative plaint about her students' reactions to Auden's "Unknown Citizen" in the December [1985] issue. But I believe the difference between her perception of Auden's irony and her students' reaction may be more a question of slant than of direct opposition.

I can imagine how Barth's attitude that the Unknown Citizen is "anathema—an evil model of banality we could not respect and would never want to be" might stir the students to defend him, for the external facts of his existence indeed indicate that he was socially responsible, amiable, and harmless. Her students seem to feel—correctly—that there is nothing reprehensible about these traits. I don't think Auden meant the Unknown Citizen to be a figure of evil or to imply that every citizen in a democracy should be a Prometheus.

The main satire in Auden's poem is directed not against the individual who fails to reject the values of his contemporaries, but against the stultified definition of personal and social worth hymned by the State. In other words, the poem has to be understood not as saying something about Unknown Citizen JS/07/M/378, who really isn't visible at all, but about the unnamed persona (bureaucrat, sociologist, or politician) speaking for the society that chooses this invisibility as its ideal.

We get a list of associations, habits, and achievements that the official persona has looked at in choosing an ideal citizen. The fact that the paramount criterion of the ideal citizen is that he is unknown, and the pathetic shallowness of the other qualities (and absences of qualities) on the official list, are ironic condemnations of the failure of modern

society to define and pursue the good and to settle instead for the workable. The satire is against a society that has no vision of true human worth, not against the individual who is doing the best he can. The values expressed in the State's elegy are not evil; they're terribly, heartbreakingly insufficient. That is the meaning of the poem's final lines: "Was he happy? Was he free? The question is absurd./If anything were wrong, we should certainly have heard."

Barth dwells on the extent to which her students identified their own circumstances with those of the Unknown Citizen. To the extent they did so, I suspect they may have felt justifiably threatened by her attack on his conformity and normality. Students' sense of irony is often too fragile to embrace self-satire. But I believe that students, even more perhaps in the eighties than in the sixties, will understand satire directed against the forms and signs of institutional approval.

CHARLIE KLEIN
Solano Community College

WRITING CENTER NEWS

We at Santa Rosa Junior College were very interested to read about your proposed column "outside english/inside the writing center," because it reminds us that there are others like us who see the need to establish a means of communication among two-year college writing centers.

Last spring we sent a survey to all two-year colleges in California asking for information about their writing centers and about the kinds of knowledge they would like to share with, or receive from other writing centers. We also asked if there was interest in a newsletter for two year college writing centers; to that question our many respondants answered an overwhelming "yes!"

We know there is a real need for a publication which can focus solely on the issues facing two-year college writing centers. Many of our situations, problems, and solutions are unique to us and cannot be sufficiently addressed in a journal which also concerns itself with the needs of writing centers at four-year schools or with other aspects of the teaching of English. We need a place to discuss our particular philosophies and roles, to air our grievances and share our triumphs. We also need to be able to share administrative and pedagogical strategies with each other—tips on generating ADA and on training peer tutors or aides; materials for teaching mechanics, usage, revision, ESL skills; advice on using computers, on involving classroom teachers with the writing center, and on publicity. We need a newsletter that focuses on us.

This fall, we at Santa Rosa Junior College have responded to that need by creating the *Newswriter*, a newsletter devoted to two-year college writing centers. Our first issue has already been sent to all California two-year colleges, and we are in the process of planning a more ambitious second issue. Because we hope that the *Newswriter* will thrive, we need support in the form of subscriptions and article submissions from those of you involved with writing centers. For more information, contact:

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JEAN HEGLAND
ARNOLD SOLKOV
Santa Rosa Junior College

LITERATURE IN THE EIGHTIES

Literature as Part of Freshman Composition

by ARNOLD SOLKOV
Santa Rosa Junior College

Speaking of teaching literature in community colleges, I should like to tell you of a plan we at Santa Rosa Junior College developed over the recent years to teach literature at a time when enrollments in literature classes have dropped to an all-time low. We regard teaching literature as a significant aspect of our profession; we are not only teachers of composition, after all. When people of my generation were preparing to teach, the major training we received in graduate school was the teaching of literature. These days, graduate students in English study the teaching of composition so that they begin their careers in composition with a foundation of composition theory. Meanwhile, we all yearn to teach literature, while most of the classes available in two-year colleges are classes of composition. In 1981, with some prodding from me, my English Department at Santa Rosa Junior College invented the Work of Literary Merit (WOLM).

A bit of background: We teach English 1A—Freshman Composition—by having many sections of the course each semester, averaging thirty students per section. The only element these sections have in common is requiring 8,000-10,000 words of reasoned prose, as our course description reads. Most instructors use expository prose readers as the basis for the classes' reading, a typical approach to instruction in this basic course. Why not add one additional ingredient, one that would be common to all classes? This common reading would serve not only to provide all English 1A students a common experience, but also to provide all instructors with a common teaching experience so that they could talk to each other about teaching both literature and composition.

Thus WOLM was born. The rules for determining a work of literary merit were simple. One tacitly understood rule was that the work should be prose fiction. Nominations were open to all department members. As I received nominations of titles, I announced them in the department's daily bulletin. At a point in the semester, we gathered in an afternoon at a member's house to make our choice for the WOLM. Each nominated title was addressed in terms of teachability, opportunities for composition assignments and research papers, personal likes and dislikes. As we sipped wine, nibbled cheese, and argued, we voted through the list of ten to twelve titles until we reached the one title upon which we could agree. Not that the choice was unanimous, for often the final vote split down the middle. However, we all agreed that regardless of our own individual preferences, and the heated arguments, we would abide by the agreement and would teach the chosen book in all sections.

One important benefit of the WOLM has been the important department meeting each semester in which we do not talk about class size, problems with administration, dirty classrooms; instead, we discuss the one issue that brought us together in the first place—our love for literature. For those two hours or so, relaxing in more pleasant ambiance than the department's conference room, enjoying good Sonoma County wines and wide assortment of cheeses, we discuss books. We

discuss them; we argue about them; we try to persuade others to accept our critical viewpoint; we develop a framework for teaching them. Oftentimes, these discussion are the best we have in the department. During the teaching of the novel, we continue the discussion more informally, talking with one another about how to teach the novel and about the kinds of writing assignments that work, exchanging ideas about the actual teaching of the novel. This exchange is an additional benefit we do not normally get in the more ordinary form of freshman English instruction. And because we use a different novel each semester, we all come to our teaching with more excitement and zest, having a new work to consider, hearing new ideas about the book, getting and giving ideas to one another.

And the works of literary merit themselves: these have been substantial, guaranteed to challenge our students. We started with *Candide*. One thing we learned very quickly was the need to involve the college library in this project. We established a reserve shelf in the library for all books discussing the work. More recently, the library has been conducting classes for our students in researching issues and ideas related to the novel in question. This element of the WOLM has brought more students than usual into the library, and it has also produced research composition of a more serious kind than before.

In subsequent semesters we have taught *As I Lay Dying*; *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, which produced our first T-shirt, "Henshard for Mayor," during a local mayoral campaign; *Henderson, the Rain King*; *1984* in 1984 (and another T-shirt); *The Horse's Mouth*; *A Gathering of Old Men*, during which time Ernest Gaines, the author, came to the college to lecture; *Pride and Prejudice*; *Madame Bovary*; and *Heart of Darkness*.

During the second year, we got the idea of giving four lectures each semester on the current novel to help our students understand the books. These lectures are given by our own staff, but we have asked members of the Social Science Department to discuss social history background; members of the Art Department to discuss art movements (*The Horse's Mouth*, *Madame Bovary*); a geography instructor to discuss geography (*Heart of Darkness*, "white places on the map"); the French instructor to discuss style (*Madame Bovary*); and we have had guest lecturers from the Sonoma State University English Department to discuss special and particular interests (Blake in *The Horse's Mouth*, Faulkner for *As I Lay Dying*). These noon-time lectures are given in a small auditorium that seats around 200 people. We publicize the lectures each semester by printing and distributing a bookmark with lecture dates and speakers (one of our members is a printer). The lectures are packed. What a pleasure it is to see so many of our students gathered together to listen to a discussion of literature. These lectures are videotaped for those who cannot attend. Many instructors require attendance, using the lecture as a basis for students to take notes and write summaries. As the hog butchers of Chicago used to say, "We use everything but the squeal."

The WOLM choice has been a happy one, I think. Our English Department fulfills its obligation to our students by teaching composition in a variety of ways using the WOLM. We also fulfill an obligation to ourselves by including the teaching of literature in what is otherwise a composition course. We emphasize the commonality of the English 1A experience by having all our English 1A students read the same work. This aspect is reinforced when they attend lectures and see the hall filled with students all engaged in the same study. Students see the interrelationship of English with other disciplines as they listen to our colleagues in other departments speaking about the same work from a different point of view. Within the department, we talk to each other about important matters, literature. But, most important, this teaching is fun.

I offer to you all an opportunity to teach literature in your composition classes during a time that is marked by students turning away from the humanities, by very low enrollments in literature classes. By the way, we have noticed a slight turn-up in enrollments in our literature courses since we started this project. I hesitate to suggest a relationship between these two, but on the other hand . . ..

—

Arnold Solkov is chair of the Santa Rosa Junior College English Department. He has been teaching English for more than thirty years. Once in a while, he gets an idea.

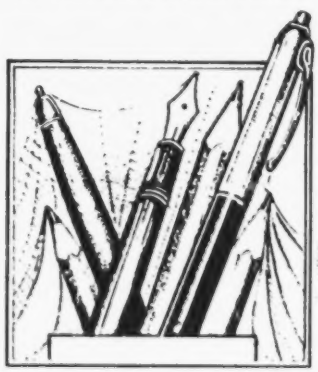
FORTY YEARS LATER

Transfer and the English Placement Test

by JACK GILL
College of San Mateo

I was stunned. After forty years I can still retrieve the "zero at the bone" I felt when I read that official notice. It was a polite letter to be sure, one filled with "regretfully" and "we are sorry to inform you" and such sweet-sounding phrases, but the message was clear: I could not, as I had anticipated, graduate from the University of Washington.

Incredulous, I stormed the Registrar's office. After all, with my "Junior College Diploma" (how quaint that sounds now!), I had been readily accepted as a transfer student; there could, surely, be nothing wrong with my transfer background because it had been thoroughly checked on my admission. I was sure of this because I had been forced to repeat one psychology course which would not transfer. No problem there that I could see. True, there were three years between St. Edward's and the University of Washington, but the recent end of World War II had brought many of us back to educations interrupted by years in the service. Was this my reward for serving my three-year hitch in hell in the Infantry? No, it just couldn't be that. Well, I knew I had carefully and cautiously met all the U's major, minor, and general education requirements. Where, then, the problem? Why now, just days before graduation, indeed with the last final already taken, was I being told I couldn't graduate? Incredulous, I stormed the Registrar's office.



"You can't graduate because you haven't taken the English Placement Test."

"WHAT?"

"To receive a B.A. from the University of Washington, you must have an English Placement Test score on your record. We have none for you. I'm sorry, but you cannot graduate until we have an English Placement Test score for you."

"BUT, BUT, BUT . . . I'M AN ENGLISH MAJOR. I got 'A's' in most of my upper-division English courses here at the U. I took more than the required number of English courses for my major. Why do I have to take Freshman English? The English Department accepted my St. Edward's two-year sequence in English as the equivalent of Freshman English and then some. Why are you telling me that I have to take Freshman English in order to graduate?"

"No one says you have to take Freshman English."

"BUT YOU JUST SAID . . . "

"I said you had to take the *English Placement Test*. I did not say you had to take *Freshman English*. We must have a notation of that score on your record or you cannot graduate. There is no requirement that you actually take Freshman English if the English Department has waived that course, as they have. But though you had the equivalent course at St. Edward's, you did not take an English Placement Test. Until you do, you cannot graduate."

"But I work for the English Department. Last year they hired me as a 'Double Reader'; I grade papers for two English profs. I've been accepted as a Graduate Student in English here at the U. I've been promised a Graduate Assistant job teaching Freshman English. Don't you people understand all that?"

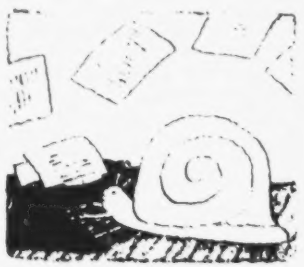
"All we understand are the University Regulations. If you want to receive a B.A. from this University, you must take the English Placement Test."

Pleas, pathos, prayers—nothing helped. And so one rainy Seattle Saturday morning, as a transfer student graduating with a major in English, feeling very old and very foolish, I sat with hundreds of very young and very eager entering freshmen and took the English Placement Test. A week or two later the same mail delivery brought my B.A. diploma from the University of Washington and a notification that I was eligible to take Freshman English at my new Alma Mater.

A few months later I was teaching Freshman English to many of those same freshmen I had taken the English Placement Test with.

Is there a moral to this tale? Certainly as I consider this and that bureaucratic maze of our own (shall I say?) more enlightened times, I dare to whisper after forty years, "Plus ça change, plus c'est la meme chose."

And I wonder also if one cannot find, as Ishmael phrased it, "still deeper the meaning of that story" in a question that has haunted me and entertained me over the years: What would have happened if I had flunked my English Placement Test?



Jack Gill teaches English at San Mateo College and is an active member of the Board of Directors of ECCTYC, serving as its liaison with the English Council of the California State University and Colleges—and still worries about the English Placement Test.

Notices

MEETINGS IN CALIFORNIA

WOMEN'S STUDIES

11-13 April. **Autobiography and Biography: Gender, Text, and Context.** Stanford University. Contact: Susan Groag Bell or Marilyn Yalom, Center for Research on Women, Stanford Univ., Stanford, CA 94305.

WESTERN REGIONAL HONORS CONFERENCE

8-10 May. **Conference on Community College Honors Programs. "2 + 2—The Best and the Brightest."** Faculty Center, University of California, Los Angeles. Contact: Toni Forsyth, Director, Honors Transfer Program, Los Angeles City College, 855 No. Vermont Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90029, (213) 669-4333.

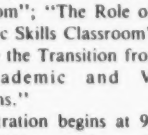
CALIFORNIA FOLKLORE SOCIETY

18-20 April. **Modesto Junior College.** The Literature and Language Arts Division of Modesto Junior College is hosting the annual California Folklore Society meeting. Contact: Odette P. Simms, English and Folklore, Modesto Junior College, 435 College Ave., Modesto, CA 95350.

CONFERENCE ON ADULT LITERACY

19 April. **"Doing the Work: A Conference on Adult Literacy"** Laney College, Oakland, CA, is for teachers and other literacy workers to meet with each other and exchange curriculum, ideas, and approaches. The conference is sponsored by Project Bridge, a Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education funded basic skills program designed for students who enter college with reading, writing, and math skills at the fifth- to tenth-grade levels. Workshop topics will include "Developing a Curriculum that Coordinates Skills and Content: Literacy Through the Teaching of Math, Sociology, Literature, Biology, and Chemistry"; "Using Proven Strategies: Moving from Oral Language to Written Language and Writing Across the Curriculum"; "Tutors in the Basic Skills Classroom"; "The Role of Testing in the Basic Skills Classroom"; "Making Possible the Transition from Remedial to Academic and Vocational Programs."

Registration begins at 9:00 a.m. in Room E203 on the Laney College campus. Workshops begin at 10:00, and the closing session is at 3:30 p.m. For full details contact: Bruce Jacobs, Director, Project Bridge, Laney College, 900 Fallon St., Oakland, CA 94607, (415) 464-3411.



A LITERACY DEBATE

12-14 June. **"A Literacy Debate: Reasoning, Style and Writing."** Univ. of San Francisco. Speakers include Walter Ong, S.J. ("Plato, Writing, Print, and Computers"), Richard Lanham and Joseph Williams ("A Literary Debate: Dialectic and the Domain of Style"), and Richard Lanham ("Literacy and the Survival of the Humanities"). Workshops include "Bilingualism and Literacy Development," led by Richard Duran; "Literacy and the Imagination," led by Gabriele Rico and Hans Guth; "Evaluation Literacy," led by Miles Myers; "The Role of Computers in the Literacy Debate," led by Michael Cohen; "Writing Across the Curriculum: Reasoning and Style," led by Ellen Strenski. Contact: Brenda Schildgen, Univ. of San Francisco, San Francisco, CA 94117, (415) 666-6809.

SCI-FI

26-29 June. **Science Fiction Research Association.** San Diego State Univ. Contact: Larry McCaffery, Dept. of English and Comparative Literature, San Diego State Univ., San Diego, CA 92182.

BASQUE CONFERENCE

5-8 AUGUST. **Basque Conference.** Univ. of California, Santa Barbara. Contact: Gloria Castresana-Waid, Basque American Foundation, P.O. Box 13212, Fresno, CA 93705.

DICKENS AND SHAKESPEARE

7-10 August. **"Dickens, Shakespeare, and the Theater."** Univ. of California, Santa Cruz. Contact: Joel J. Brattin and Nan Dorsey, Dickens Project, Kresge College, UC, Santa Cruz, CA 95064.

(Continued on Page 5)

NOTICES

(Continued from Page 4)

OTHER MEETINGS OF INTEREST

28 March-1 April. WHIM: Western Humor and Irony Membership. Arizona State University. Contact: Don L.F. Nilsen, English Dept., Arizona State Univ., Tempe, AZ 85287.

10-12 April. College English Association. Philadelphia. Contact: J.F. Kobler, English Dept., North Texas State Univ., Denton, TX 76203.

15-28 June. Interpreting the Humanities. Hobart and William Smith Colleges. Contact: Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, Box 642, Princeton, NJ 08542.

CALLS FOR PAPERS

TETYC SPECIAL ISSUE

1 April. The NCTE Committee on Film Study will combine efforts with the editors of *TETYC* to publish a special issue (December 1986) of *Teaching English in the Two-Year College* on "Film, Television, and Video: New Directions for the Teaching of English."

The following types of manuscripts are welcome: papers reporting on substantive research in the field, essays that provide a theoretical framework for integrating visual media into the teaching of English, and pedagogical articles describing specific approaches (thematic, structural, rhetorical, linguistic, aesthetic) to the study of film, television, and video within the English curriculum.

Please follow the *MLA Handbook*, 2nd ed. (1984), and submit two copies to William V. Costanzo, Dept. of English, Westchester Community College, Valhalla, NY 1985.

CONFERENCE ON RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION

15 April. Edward P.J. Corbett will be the Keynote Speaker at the fifth annual Penn State Conference on Rhetoric and Composition, to be held 8-11 July 1986, at State College, Pennsylvania. The consultants will be James Berlin, John Gage, Dixie Goswami, Maxine Hairston, and Geneva Smitherman.

Those interested in participating are invited to present papers, demonstrations, or workshops. One-page proposals will be accepted through 15 April. If you wish to submit a proposal or volunteer to chair a session, or if you are interested in more information about attending or participating, contact Prof. Marie J. Secor, Dept. of English, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA 16802.

TSLL SPECIAL ISSUE

1 July. *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* announces a special issue devoted to Studies in Nineteenth-Century British and American Fiction. Papers (twenty to thirty-five pages in length) substantially contributing to the subject are invited for submission. Send the manuscripts (with stamped self-addressed envelope) to Professors E. Bowden and W.J. Scheick, Editors, *TSLL*, Dept. of English, Parlin Hall 110, Univ. of Texas, Austin, TX 78712.

1987 *CLASSROOM PRACTICES*

1 September. The Committee on Classroom Practices in Teaching English invites educators at all levels to submit manuscripts for the 1987 *Classroom Practices*, which will focus on "Student-to-Student: Practices in Cooperative Learning."

Articles should explore such questions as how to form students into groups, how to train students to work *productively* in pairs or small groups, what group projects and activities are successful, and how to evaluate students' work in pairs or groups. Consider also cooperative learning strategies in the total Language Arts Curriculum—in the content (language, composition, literature) or in skills (speaking, listening, writing, reading).

Manuscripts (from two to ten double-spaced pages) should be sent in duplicate, with the author's name and address appearing only on a title page attached to the front of each copy. Mail manuscripts before 1 September to Jeff Golub, Committee Chair, 2201 Eastmont Way West, Seattle, WA 98199.

AT THE FACULTY MEETING

Wait
until the meeting's hour grows
late,
irritation stirs the toes,
stultifies the brain
and sends a train
of thought
entirely off the track
and naught
can well cajole it back.
That's when the *second* speaker rises
and launches into no surprises.

H. WENDELL SMITH
Santa Monica College, Retired

HM

The Dolphin Reader
Douglas Hunt, University of Missouri
1,127 pages • paper • Instructor's Guide
Just published

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Maxine Hairston, University of Texas at Austin
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Contemporary Composition
Short Edition
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GPA: Grade Performance Analyzer • Just published
Same text as above but omits the "Handbook of Grammar" section

Practical English Handbook
Seventh Edition
Floyd C. Watkins and **William B. Dillingham**
Both of Emory University
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Practical English Workbook
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John T. Hiers, Valdosta State College
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Roughdrafts: The Process of Writing
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Laraine Flemming, University of Pittsburgh
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TEACHING LITERATURE IN A WRITING CLASS

A Workable Humanities Option OR Chasing Windmills?

by RONALD HARTWELL
Chabot College
De Anza College
Diablo Valley College
Evergreen Valley College
University of San Francisco

At first glance the idea of teaching literature in a writing class may seem to be an anomaly that changes the basic emphasis of a writing program, but on closer consideration a careful observer can find some benefits to trying such an approach. For the skeptics perhaps there is no more prominent spokesman for renewed emphasis on "the failure to address content" than William J. Bennett, Secretary of Education and former Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, in his report on the need of colleges and universities to "restore coherence to their undergraduate curricula and revitalize teaching of the humanities." [See *Chronicle for Higher Education*, November 28, 1984.]

The new University of California requirements insist that some literature be taught in introductory composition transfer courses, so at least for California writing instructors there is a built-in push to somehow use literature in a transfer writing class. And Mr. Bennett is correct in his assessment of the state of humanities at least as far as literature course offerings are concerned. Most colleges and universities have been experiencing "retrenching" (*i.e.* declining enrollments) in literature courses for quite some time. Thus the faddism of the last decade when sagging numbers led some desperate institutions to offer science fiction, gothic novels, mysteries and many other experimental failures "instead of the major trends in society, religion, art, literature, and policies," so aptly referred to by Mr. Bennett. Since most college and university literature programs are dying, the re-introduction of major literary works or, at

least, major works by major literary figures into a writing curriculum, may be the last vestige of literature to be found in once-powerful dynasties called English Departments with their formerly strong dominance in the academic community.

After having tried numerous approaches to teaching writing—from a highly "structured" emphasis on rhetorical models and types to a loosely "creative" and "free" writing style with all the variations in between from journals to having students write with their eyes closed—I have seen the results from each pattern of emphasis along that spectrum and can say that each is a

partial answer to a longstanding literary problem. First, if the approach is too "structured," the students will probably get the formula down sooner or later, even if they have to wait to see how their classmates did the assignment and turn it in late with some amazing excuses (one of many reasons why I no longer accept late papers); or, if the angle is "free" expression (no matter how costly to content and the instructor's eyesight and mental growth), stuff supposed to encourage creativity, the work produced will often have little visible focus or structure but sometimes will have a free-floating impact, momentary flair of imaginative expression or point of view, an occasional poetic turn of phrase, a memorable metaphor, or, in the worst case scenario, degenerate into self-indulgent egotism where any expression of self is mistakenly thought to be worthy of the readers' time and effort.

This dilemma can be partly solved and is, I think, by humanities, history, art, philosophy, and logic/critical thinking programs intent on infusing the reading curriculum of a general education program with some rigor and analytical-critical thinking skills so as to produce some sensible essays and at least provide some semblance of college-level thought about our literary, artistic, and cultural heritage. Or, as the philosophers put it, to discourse intelligently about the limits of knowledge and intellectual, cultural, or "reasoned" pursuit. In a few words, to acquaint the next generation with the life of the mind and with mankind's creative spirit.

So the pursuit goes on. Many papers are written, read, graded, and returned. Always there is something missing from both approaches—the self-expressive and the structured—even when a taste of logical analysis is added. Clearly there are good and even enthusiastic discussions generated, and some students find a way to correlate that with their next writing assignment, but the missing beacon on the hill is literature with a capital *L*. That is one of the major underlying lasting values of writing, after all; writing that lasts as literature is the artistic blend of thought, structure, and meaning into a worthwhile, timeless, and enjoyable-to-read genre. Only a liar or a pedant will claim that a good novel is less enjoyable to read than an essay, no matter how well wrought.

But herein lies the problem: how to use the different genre of literature besides non-fiction (essays) to teach students writing that is not itself meant to be literature or even necessarily literary and will be written in the essay form? That is, except for poetry, drama, and fiction writing courses, what once were labeled "creative writing" courses, what kind of writing can a student do in a "regular" transfer credit reading and composition course?

For most instructors of these basic "core" or "transfer" reading and composition courses, the classroom deluge

of papers produces results that are quantitatively not often spectacular even for the best instructors. After all, Macrorie's students may not write "Engfish" and the third-grader's fried egg description still beats many grown-ups' efforts to recreate the perspective of lost youth and innocence, but a little Samuel Taylor Coleridge from "Frost at Midnight" would explain more of what at least one of the adult options is to go beyond the level of merely "fresh" usage.

But just as Twain's Huck in his river journey out of the realm of American innocence renews himself repeatedly, we must also in our quest for the Holy Grail. To conquer the composition-literature dragon, legions of Quixotes must go to battle each day to slay the windmills only to discover that many are to remain windbags.

What can be seen is that as each new academic wind shifts the direction of the spring mill (diploma mill?), the results are slanted to meet that particular emphasis. But what cannot as readily or immediately be seen beneath the surface is the literary foundation or lack of it for such activity. Without the literature to feed the springs, so to speak, the water will sooner or later come up bitter: the wells may pump mud, sand, sludge and eventually come up empty. The well can never run dry, though, if the Quixotes take their vessels of good, clear, pure literature (not the cheap imitation with additives, disguised as pure) to prime the well.

Let me show a few examples of what can be done to introduce samples from literature, some written by Nobel Prize winners, to writing students: For a description of a favorite place I use Ernest Hemingway's opening paragraph of *A Farewell to Arms*.

> In the late summer of that year we lived in a house in a village that looked across the river and plain to the mountains. In the bed of the river there were pebbles and boulders, dry and white in the sun, and the water was clear and swiftly moving and blue in the channels. Troops went by the house and down the road and the dust they raised powdered the leaves of the trees. The trunks of the trees too were dusty and the leaves fell early that year and we saw the troops marching along the road and the dust rising and leaves, stirred by the breeze, falling and the soldiers marching and afterward the road bare and white except for the leaves.

After being read aloud, this passage provokes discussion of such elements as the dominant impression, key words such as the *dust* and *leaves*, and from these kinds of descriptive details the students can be led to larger metaphorical considerations beyond figurative language, such as a possible link between the falling leaves and the passing soldiers marching to their deaths. Not bad for one paragraph. You can throw in foreshadowing if you want.

To make the study of description more complete, or if you don't like Hemingway, try Steinbeck's description of the vacant lot with the rusty boilers in

Cannery Row. I use this novel to illustrate how physical description of a person, if the significant details are chosen, can be tied to elements in the

(Continued on Page 7)

TEACHING LITERATURE IN A WRITING CLASS

(Continued from Page 6)

person's character or personality, such as Steinbeck's excellent portrayal of Lee Chong thumping his fat sausage fingers on the change mat. The scene, from Chapter 1, just precedes Mack's coming into the store to ask Lee to let him take care of the old Abbeville building:

> Lee Chong considered it as a storehouse for groceries, as a kind of warehouse, but he gave that up on second thought. It was too far away and anyone can go in through a window. He was tapping the rubber mat with his gold ring and considering the problem when the door opened and Mack came in.

The story goes on and Steinbeck returns to the same details to illustrate Lee Chong's shrewd business sense and Mack's effect on his mental serenity. After Mack suggests that Lee's place might burn down if he refuses to "rent" it to them, the descriptive details Steinbeck chooses are sparse but quite effective:

> Lee tilted his head back and looked into Mack's eyes though the half-glasses and Lee's tapping finger slowed its tempo as he thought deeply. In Mack's eyes there was good will and fellowship and a desire to make everyone happy. Why then did Lee Chong feel slightly surrounded? Why did his mind pick its way as delicately as a cat through cactus? It had been sweetly done, almost in a spirit of philanthropy. Lee's mind leaped ahead at the possibilities—no, they were probabilities, and his finger tapping slowed still further. He saw himself refusing Mack's request and he saw the broken glass from the windows. Then Mack would offer a second time to watch over and preserve Lee's property—and at the second refusal, Lee could smell the smoke, could see the little flames creeping up the walls. Mack and his friends would try to help to put it out. Lee's finger came to a gentle rest on the change mat.

Besides revealing character, the descriptive details can lead into a discussion of the use of dialogue:

> Lee's finger came to a gentle rest on the change mat. He was beaten. He knew that. There was left to him only the possibility of saving face and Mack was likely to be very generous about that. Lee said, "You like pay lent my place? You like live there same hotel?"
>
> Mack smiled broadly and he was generous. "Say—" he cried. "That's an idear. Sure. How much?"
>
> Lee considered. He knew it didn't matter what he charged. He wasn't going to get it anyway. He might just as well make it a really sturdy face-saving sum. "Fi' dolla' week," said Lee.
>
> Mack played it through to the end. "I'll have to talk to the boys about it," he said dubiously. "Couldn't you make that four dollars a week?"
>
> "Fi' dolla'," said Lee firmly.
>
> "Well, I'll see what the boys say," said Mack.

Without stretching it, perhaps a few elements of persuasion might enter into a discussion, and at least the subject matter, literature, will guarantee some interest, a humanities focus, and often some surprises in terms of relevance. If this dialogue doesn't suit you, try the bantering between Lady Brett and Jake in *The Sun Also Rises* or some lines from *Hamlet*, such as the bedroom scene with his mother or the fantastic conversation with the ghost of his dead father.

With a poetic sensibility the beginning student may clutter a paper with metaphors. A limit of two or three to a paper can help prevent this. But have you seen, or rather can you forget, the dullness of papers without any metaphors? A few dragon windmills are far better than no windmills at all, even if we have to settle for no dragons.

Peter Elbow states that good writing has to have power and voice and magic, and to be forceful it must also be directed to an audience [see Peter Elbow, *Writing with Power*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1981, especially Chapters 18, 26, and 29]. No small undertaking. Where better to find such models than in good literature?

To be turned on to writing, a student must be involved in at least some meaningful encounter, even if not a love affair, with literature. If it's fiction, maybe the sense of scene or place will be strongest; if poetry, perhaps the sensory richness of language with all its possible suggestive powers, brevity, and multiple meanings will be the emphasis. Drama might require a greater sense of imagination to read with understanding and a sense of structure as well as audience and how people actually speak.

What better place to look for the best written examples than in good literature? To say that we have been subsisting for too long on a diet of essays that stifle creativity or that we have abandoned structure in an attempt to avoid the danger of starving intellectually only to dilute the substance of thought with self-indulgent discourse or contemporary faddist issues may be too harsh; too harsh, that is, if Orwell's "Shooting an Elephant" or "Why I Write" is on the required reading list. To be sure, a strict use of only essays can be successful up to a point, but the true inclination of writers who take writing seriously is to be striving for the standards not set by textbook philosophy, or a kind of fantasizing research journalism of the "I-Search" variety, or diary-journal exercises alone, although Anne Frank and Henry Thoreau make excellent choices. What all writers, in their heart of hearts, know is that the standard of written expression *is* literature. Journalism provided good training for Twain, Hemingway, Orwell, and many others but is o.k. only if you "get out soon enough." Shouldn't we be using this (to continue the metaphor) rich, wholesome food for ourselves and our students, rather than starving on a restricted, less nutritious menu?

When Melville's Bartleby went on a hunger strike, finally gave up and "preferred not to," it wasn't because he was a copyist but because what he copied was so incredibly dull, boring, uninteresting, and inevitably deadly. We can blame ourselves, or our methods, or see one instructor as "nice" and another as "mean" to explain why students are turned off by writing. But one sure reason they are turned off is the dull, lackluster prose presented as models instead of some inspiring literature to enrich their lives and stimulate their minds and imaginations.

If it is true that students do not read much of anything except perhaps computer manuals these days, we are all the more obligated to give them some good literature to freshen the polluted wells. We may be fighting a losing battle with the electronic media, especially television and computers, but the Don Quixotes are still out there hunting wind-

mills, and the papers that are produced might as well resemble, even in some small way, the qualities of good if not great literature rather than the sit-com tedium and impersonal self-help, get-rich-quick how-to mentality that turned them away from reading.

If we avoid becoming museum curators of the literature but instead somehow rekindle the life of the works presented by reading scenes aloud, acting out parts, using appropriate quality video and film productions, biographies (such as an old William Faulkner film in Oxford, Mississippi, at the time he received the Nobel Prize), discussing specific passages or "themes" or whatever works to draw the student closer to the writer's world instead of away from it, there might be a future for our species. It may not work, but it is my guess that it probably is the best chance we have to enlist our students to rejoin us in that quest for the impossible dream and the unreachable star. Dulcinea may be too beautiful to be real, and more barmaid than saint, but can we ask students to write about trivial pursuit unless our own minds have degenerated below the tragic or even tragicomic level?

So with all that as given, let us go out as Don Quixotes riding after our phantom windmills and at least instruct one last generation of "chip head" Sanchos into the basic acquaintance with that lost world once peopled by such giants as Cervantes, Shakespeare, and Melville. That is, if we care to risk such venerable pearls (or Steinbeck's *The Pearl*?) before such indifferent _____. Call today's students what you will. Some are. Others aren't.

In my own experience I have found that the traditional reader and handbook rhetoric text approach, or the "stories," as some students call the essays in an essay text, have been as much taken for granted in basic writing courses as they have been of little value for genuine writing success. These books are often overly ambitious, hastily constructed, or have some other purpose than what fits into a writing program. If included, the logic sections often seem to be the single most useful parts. But most of us still use these kinds of texts for whatever our reasons. (Why else would there be so many to choose from?)

My most successful uses of literature in a writing program come, as I have stated, in the first few assignments which include a description of a favorite place or an interesting person. These and other assignments reveal more to the students about what makes up good description (sensory details, the use of figurative language, especially similies and metaphors, the awareness of spatial and temporal arrangement, and the sense of a dominant impression and key words) than what usually is offered by most writing texts. These early assignments pave the way for the narrative, and the students enjoy the writing because they can "see" what the writer is presenting. As part of the humanities it has meaning and impact all at once, so they understand the assignment and go off and try their own efforts, and the results are usually very successful.

After the first three assignments or so, an experimental poem or focussed essay assignments aimed at answering questions about literature read for that occasion prompt more analytical and comparative thinking. The texts I currently use are *The Conscious Reader* and *The St. Martin's Guide to Writing*, supplemented by various novels, films and videos, some already mentioned. I hope that in the future there will be more and better texts tailored to this kind of approach. For now, I have my windmills to slay and quite an adventure lies ahead. Care to join my quest?

A former full-time university English Instructor, Ron Hartwell has been teaching composition and literature courses since 1967. For the last ten years or so he has been teaching part-time at various locations around the greater San Francisco Bay area. More recently, he also has become seriously involved with photography.

A SUMMARY OF SESSIONS
ECCTYC's Fall 1985 Statewide Conference

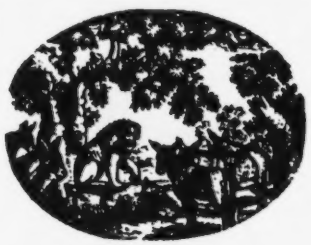
The following are brief summaries of many of the presentations that took place at ECCTYC's Fall 1985 Statewide Conference, 21-23 November, at the Clarion Hotel near the San Francisco Airport.

NEW MODEL FOR ASSESSMENT IN THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Presenter: MIKE PAPARELLA, American College Testing

Michael J. Paparella of ACT presented an overview of the process and philosophy of ACT's community college assessment program, ASSET. Paparella, who is Western Regional Director of ACT's Career Planning Services, recognizes assessment as part of a much larger program for community colleges, encompassing more than just basic skills. When students receive immediate feedback from assessment testing as part on an admissions procedure, they are able to get off to a good start, and the retention rate rises.

Paparella explained that the keys to students' success and retention are not



only their developing necessary academic skills but also their solidifying their career goals and their recognizing the relevance of courses required to attain those goals. For example, a vocational student working towards a certificate must understand the relevance of reading and composition courses to achieve that goal. This, of course, requires caring advisors who know the standards for each course and who can effectively counsel students into appropriate courses. With effective assessment and counseling, student motivation remains high and retention rates rise.

The ASSET assessment program is designed for quick administration and scoring, so that students can be counseled immediately during registration, an arrangement especially valuable for last-minute walk-in students. Moreover, since the first six weeks of a semester are critical for retention, the students' needs must be recognized and met quickly.

The research support system of the ACT ASSET Program provides course grade predicitions based on the ASSET assessment, which can aid both students and institutions in designing effective programs. As Paparella pointed out, however, these predictions tell what is likely to happen to students if neither they nor the institution change. But, ideally, the institution will intervene with appropriate resources, and the students will also show more motivation as they recognize the importance and significance of the assessment. The greater the student effort and the institutional intervention, the lower the correlation between course grade prediction and final results.

—SHIRLEY SYKES
San Diego Mesa College

DEPARTMENT CHAIRS: SOME ISSUES AND SOME ANSWERS

Moderators: NINA THEISS, Santa Monica College; KEN COONEY, Shasta College

Some twenty-five people participated in a heated session dominated by three topics: (1) the new UC Berkeley 1A/1B requirement and its aftermath at other four-year campuses, (2) load reduction at community colleges, and (3) community college instructors teaching remedial classes on UC or CSU campuses.

The participants generally agreed that the UC Berkeley position was narrow-minded. Linda Morris, Writing Programs Coordinator at UC Davis, stated that this was not just a community college problem; all the UC English departments, including Berkeley's, are equally upset. She believes, however, that other UC campuses are likely to change their requirements. UC Irvine equates Long Beach City College's English 1 course with UCI's Subject A. San Bernardino Valley College is thinking of moving to four-unit courses for their English 1A and 1B. Other responses ranged from "We just lied" (on the questionnaire UC Berkeley demanded from all community college English departments to see if they comply with UCB's requirements) to "We have added a three-unit course in Critical Thinking."

Load, as always, was a topic of concern. At Ventura College, all composition courses meet five hours a week for five units, with a ninety-student maximum if a teacher teaches only composition classes. Fresno City College reported that English 1 is a four-unit course, the fourth unit being a research component. At the College of San Mateo, 1B counts as a composition course (four units for instructors, three for students).

The chair of the English Department at San Diego Mesa College described the dilemma she faced when a dean arranged to have fifty-four sections of remedial English taught at UC San Diego without consulting with the SDMC English Department. All chairs were alerted to be on guard against similar arrangements in their districts. Feelings on the issue ranged, however, from thinking that such arrangements are a good idea and beneficial to the colleges involved to outrage at the idea. What may result, some said, is a short-term advantage for colleges with ADA problems, but a long-term disadvantage as four-year schools keep students at their campuses while the community colleges provide the remedial help needed. Without this assistance, many of the students would be full-time or part-time students at the community colleges, perhaps taking other courses as well.

—KEN COONEY
Shasta College
NINA THEISS
Santa Monica College

THE DIALECTICAL JOURNAL: A STUDENT-DIRECTED WAY THROUGH LITERATURE

Presenters: SHEILA KOFF, Orange Coast College and NORMA TRACY, Cypress College

This presentation proved to be one of the most popular and most discussed at the ECCTYC Conference. It involved a method, one which was new to many of us in the group, of using a journal in a literature class. The double-entry journal asks the students to record certain quotations or incidents in a piece of fiction, especially the ones that struck them as being important or puzzling. The other half of the page would have room for the students to record their questions or reactions to each passage selected. Since students do their own asking, rather than depending upon the editor of the anthology or the instructor of the class to pose questions, they become much more active readers. Both presenters emphasized the improvement they saw in their students becoming better, closer readers, much more aware of details and meanings in the stories.

The students then summarize the story, based on their entries, and write a general response, based upon their reactions and questions. One suggestion was that small circles of five students discuss the response together to develop a consensus summary. The group summaries are then put upon the black board. Class discussion about the differences and similiarities follows, with the possibility of a literary analysis paper being a culminating activity.

Both Ms. Koff and Ms. Tracy conveyed a good deal of enthusiasm about this technique, which, of course, in large measure determines the success or failure of any new technique a teacher tries. They made it clear that this process was a time consuming one, and thus fewer selections can be covered in semester. However, they felt that the students' better, more honest writing, writing that takes more risks and evidenced the use of critical thinking, was well worth the sacrifice of a larger quantity of fiction and the time usually given to the teacher's lecturing *about* that piece of fiction.

These presenters provided an excellent handout, explaining more their rationale and showing student samples. If you are interested in a copy of this booklet, please request it from either Ms. Koff or Ms. Tracy.

—BILL DECKER
College of the Sequoias

CURRENT COMMUNITY COLLEGE ISSUES

Presenters: CONNIE ANDERSON and RONN FARLAND, Office of the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges

Discussing the details of the Master Plan review, Connie Anderson and Ronn Farland essentially called it a "reaffirmation of the importance of the community colleges" as institutions of higher learning. They stressed the current focus on the intersegmental nature of the transfer function, the need to encourage vocational students to transfer, the various possibilities of associate degrees, the questions relating to remediation, the "professionalization" of faculty, the liaison between community colleges and adult schools, the possible public confusion about the community service function of community colleges, the matriculation proposals, the fiscal alternatives to ADA funding (*e.g.* differential funding), and the increased role for faculty in exchange for greater local autonomy in educational decision making. They predict a "significant loosening of the belt" in the upcoming budget—but with some strings attached.

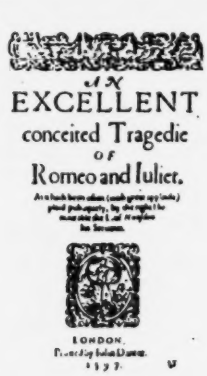
—BOB MOGNIS
Modesto Junior College

SHAKESPEARE, THE GLOBE, AND THE CLASSROOM

Presenters: BRUCE ANDERS, West Los Angeles College; BARBARA BILSON, Santa Monica College; LLOYD THOMAS, Los Angeles Mission College

Bruce Anders, Barbara Bilson, and Lloyd Thomas each presented individual solutions to a problem we have all faced: how can we make Shakespeare accessible to our students. Each of the ideas and the resulting courses is as different as the people who presented them, and, no doubt, the results are as interesting as the approaches.

Bruce Anders' course is a combination of Shakespeare on the printed page and Shakespeare on film. The students learn as much about film and its techniques as they do about Shakespeare. Anders uses a number of filmed versions of the plays his students read; for



example, for *Romeo and Juliet* he uses complete films or excerpts from the BBC's television production of 1980, Zeffirelli's youthful film of 1968, and Castellani's version of 1954.

There are enough filmed versions of all the plays he uses for him to show at least two films of each, including a Russian film (Kozintsev, 1964) of *Hamlet*; Orson Wells' Macbeth (1948); a Japanese version of *Macbeth* by Kurosawa, the *The Throne of Blood* (1959); and various BBC productions. The students read, discuss, view, write papers, give oral reports, and take an exam. Anders's demonstration, with appropriate film, was impressive.

Barbara Bilson's approach is equally impressive and interesting but totally different and stays within Shakespeare's own world. She explains all of the concepts and circumstances of the Elizabethan world that her students need to know to understand what goes on and why certain things happen the way that they do. She chooses the plays for the course, as much as she can, according to what the players in her area (western Los Angeles) plan to put on.

What makes her course interesting is her pairing of plays to bring out similarities of ideas and themes and the different techniques that Shakespeare uses to develop these. This system breaks away from the types (the comedies, the tragedies, the history plays) and, in fact, mixes them. *Richard III* and *Macbeth* develop similar things, but Richard as melodrama and Macbeth as tragedy. Pairing *Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Tempest* shows the use of the play within a play, the deus ex machina, the use of servants who do the bidding of their masters, the difference between the real and magical worlds. A tripling of *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Othello*, and *A Winter's Tale* brings out the themes of jealousy, resentment, feigned and real death, guilt, attempts at penance, resolution, and the nature of illusion. The possibilies of pairing are only not quite endless. Bilson suggested a number of possibilities: *Henry V*, *Hamlet*; *Henry V*, *Richard III* or *Richard II*; *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Love's Labor Lost*; *Richard III*, *Hamlet*, *King Lear*; *Othello*, *King Lear*; *Romeo and Juliet*, *Antony and Cleopatra*—as well as a number of other combinations.

Lloyd Thomas has figured out a way to introduce the language of Shakespeare to his students through the language that they know best: the language of advertising. Elizabethan rhetoric is alive and well in the pages of our slick magazines. Thomas has explained his technique of having his students adapt current advertisements to characters and scenes in some of Shakespeare's plays in the December 1985 issue of *inside english* ["Shakespeare Stoops to Conquer," p. 5]—advertisements that tout the virtues of acquiring real estate, hiring lawyers, how to avoid bankruptcy among many others. In addition, he finds that the various tropes that one finds in Shakespeare appear in large numbers of advertisements: "It's for the upwardly frugal" (ad for Volkswagen); "PG&E is always working to keep nature's power from interrupting your power" (for a utilities company); "Newsweek Diaries make memorable gifts"; "Here's a suit that can take us all to the cleaners" (ad for insurance against liability); "Now you can have your Crest and pump it too" (toothpaste). Thomas's was an amusing and informative presentation. There is yet hope for us, for Shakespeare, and for literature if the presentations of these three people are portents of the future.

—GORDON TAYLOR
Yuba College

WANDAH: COMPUTERS AND COLLEGE WRITING

Presenter: HOWARD JONES, Allan Hancock College

WANDAH is a writing system that contains a prewriting program, a word processor, and a reviewing and revision aid. Howard Jones uses WANDAH in both his freshman composition and remedial writing classes.

WANDAH was developed at UCLA and is about to be marketed by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich as the HBJ Word Processor. Allan Hancock was one of four schools (and the only community college) involved in the testing of this system, which the college has used for the past 2½ years. Students use it for freewriting, nut-shelling (prewriting), and planning. Since it is a simple system to learn, students are able to use it after only 1½ hours of training. Its major weaknesses are its high cost and the short life span of the instructors' discs.

—KEN COONEY
Shasta College

ASSESSMENT, PLACEMENT, RETENTION

Presenter: DORIS O'NEILL, Solano Community College

Doris O'Neill chronicled Solano Community College's development of an assessment and placement program, sharing with her audience procedural and instructional problems of initiating a testing program. Solano's English Department selected the Comparative Guidance Placement test for its test of English and reading skills (the college now also uses the CGP for math as well). Students meet the English and reading requirement if they score 31 or above on *either* the English or the reading test; students scoring from 22-30 and from 11-21 are placed in remedial classes; students scoring below are referred to Special Services. Retention studies show that the program is working.

A number of features that have facilitated the program are worth noting:

(1) An assessment center has been established for testing and counseling.

(2) Testing information is carefully presented to students: the tests are described; the testing schedule is included in registration packets; and procedures for taking the tests are clearly outlined.

(3) Students are given printouts which provide their test scores and information about the courses they are eligible to take.

(4) Raw scores and waivers are printed on the rosters so that instructors have information about students and can verify preregistration.

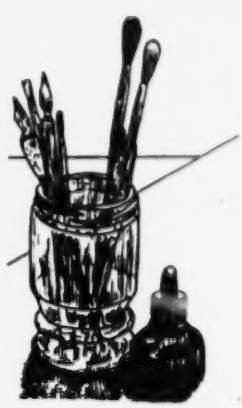
(5) Students may use ACT/SAT as well as CGP for clearance.

(6) ESL students are encouraged to take a test designed for non-native speakers.

(7) The CGP is given at local high schools to facilitate the testing program.

(8) An hour orientation is given for students to that they may be counseled about their test results. Orientations are held both in the high schools and at the college.

(9) Reading and English scores are kept on file for six semesters; math scores are kept for one year. (The staff believes that skills levels do not remain constant.)



(10) Holistically scored essay exams are given the first day of class as a check on the CGP. Few students are moved to either higher or lower classes.

(11) Mastery tests are given at the end of each course and are used to determine whether a student moves to the next class.

(12) Students needing specific remediation are encourage to take variable unit courses in the writing center to supplement their English and reading courses.

(13) Course expectations are published in book form to aid students and counselors in assessing the difficulty of a course. "Course expectations" are statements that describe reading levels, amounts of writing, etc., developed by teachers who teach the courses. Teachers try to identify common skills levels and maintain consistency in a given course.

—LOIS POWERS
Fullerton College

(Continued on Page 14)

"REviews" features discussions of books and media programs that are suitable for use in writing or literature courses or that have special interest for teachers of English. These reviews should be from 100 to 500 words and should evaluate the book's or program's effective use in a classroom, in a learning resource center, by an individual student, or by the instructor. Include with the review all pertinent publication information, the number of pages or length of running time, and the cost.

READING AND WRITING IN CONTEXT

by SHARON STEEBER
Santa Monica College

Contexts: Writing and Reading is not just another "how to write" text that only incidentally teaches students how to read better. Nor are the readings simply an excuse for the student to have something to write about. Instead, the authors, Jeanette Harris (Texas Tech University) and Ann Moseley (East Texas State University), really do teach writing *AND* reading, which they see as related thinking processes not to be separated.

Contexts, the authors explain in their preface, grew out of their frustration in trying to teach reading to college freshmen without teaching writing. They found that teaching one skill without the other was "not only difficult but also inefficient and ineffective." Recent research and the experiences of other English teachers backed up their observations.

Accordingly, *Contexts* begins by introducing the student to what it calls the "reading/writing situation." This situation requires that the reader and the writer deal with the same issues: the subject of a written message, its purposes, and its audience. The text—a workbook divided into two major sections, "The Paragraph" and "The Sentence"—then guides the student through the essential steps of both responding to and producing written messages. In the seven chapters that form "The Paragraph," students identify in the reading selections the elements that mark the well-written paragraph; then they practice them.

The first chapter does an especially good job of helping the student learn the difference between general and specific words, then general and specific statements. This study becomes the foundation on which the following chapters depend. These chapters cover paragraph development, organization, coherence, and conclusions. The last chapter of "The Paragraph" moves the students from the paragraph to the essay and the thesis.

Throughout Part One, students learn pre-reading activities that help them relate the ideas they are about to read to their own experiences and prior knowledge. For example, before reading John Steinbeck's "My Native Place," students recall a place to which they have had a strong reaction; then they use free writing in their journals and brainstorming to list details about that place. This list not only generates interest in the reading but also acts as prewriting for a paragraph. Pre-reading activities always tie in with the prewriting activities, leading the students into creative reading and then to the paragraphs they will write.

Building on these activities, Part Two ("The Sentence") addresses the simple, complex, and compound sentence. It also focuses on editing and proofreading. Part Two further develops the pre-reading and prewriting strategies taught in Part One. Students continue to read paragraphs or very short selections; the writing assignments, however, now give them the option of writing paragraphs or essays.

An especially noteworthy feature of *Contexts* is the balance and quality of the reading selections. Along with their students, English instructors will enjoy the very readable paragraphs drawn from the works of Willa Cather, Jack London, Frank O'Connor, John Steinbeck, Maya Angelou, and Ashley Montagu, among others. The selections, chosen from literature, social commentary, natural science, and college textbooks, reflect a variety of styles and diverse genres. Titles such as "Aging in the Land of the Young," "Things: The Throw-Away Society," and "Should Men Cry?" give some idea of the interest level of the readings. (On a similar note, what might have been a dry drill in sentence combining becomes a lively retelling of the story of *The Glass Menagerie*.)

Several other aspects deserve mention. One is the way in which various concepts dovetail. For example, the presentation of general and specific details early in the book prepares the student for the concepts of coordination and subordination that come soon after. This study, which is not at all as heavy-handed as it might sound, gives the students the tools necessary for perceiving organization in what they read and write and for then applying that skill to outlining. The three chapters devoted to the sentence again build on the student's knowledge of coordination and subordination. The text features a helpful appendix that offers sections on capitalization, spelling, and vocabulary. The vocabulary section addresses techniques for determining the meaning of new words through their context or their structure (prefixes, roots, and suffixes). A minor but convenient feature is the workbook format with its spiral binding that allows the text to lie flat while the student works with it. Students can also easily tear out and turn in pages of completed work without destroying the binding.

With which level of students would *Contexts* work best? The authors, who both teach at universities, say that it's for "the beginning writer and reader." Most two-year colleges now offer three levels of writing courses: one at the transfer level and two at the developmental level. (And, in a sense, even the transfer-level course is a beginning one.) However, *Context*'s readability (approximate grade level, based on sentence length and vocabulary) is too high for the lowest of these three levels. A sampling of the instructions and various reading selections indicates, using the Fry scale, an average readability level of eleventh grade, making the workbook most appropriate for the student at or just below the transfer level. The level of the readings and the length of the instructional apparatus in each chapter, while well-organized and thorough, would probably frustrate the student who reads much below college level. In addition, because *Contexts* requires considerable instructor guidance and feedback, it is more appropriate for the classroom than for a lab in which students work independently.

These qualifications aside, the instructor who teaches combined reading and writing courses will welcome this solid, carefully thought out workbook. But it is also just as appropriate for writing courses. The instructor who teaches separate reading classes, however, would probably supplement the text with more materials for critical reading skills; longer selections; and articles for study-reading, skimming, and scanning skills. *Contexts: Writing and Reading* does a fine job of helping students locate key concepts, be they stated or implied. It does, though—as its title suggests—ultimately emphasize writing skills over reading skills, even as it attempts to combine them into a single coordinated text.

☐ Harris, Jeannette and Ann Moseley. *Contexts: Writing and Reading*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1985, 398 pages, $14.95.

Sharon Steeber teaches reading courses at all levels at Santa Monica College and has published several texts and a novel.

A MASTER OF THE SHORT STORY FORM

by WALT McCALLUM
Santa Rosa Junior College

The following review is reprinted from the Santa Rosa Press-Democrat, *8 December 1985.*

The short story is one of the most difficult forms of fiction for any writer to attempt. It demands much of the writer in precision, compactness, and vivid execution. Perhaps that's one reason the short story is so difficult to do well and why so few writers do more than merely dabble with it.

One who doesn't dabble is Gerald Haslam, professor of English at Sonoma State University. Haslam, whose most recent collection of stories is *Snapshots: Glimpses of the Other California*, proves once again that he is one of the best writers around.

Snapshots deals with the inhabitants of California's Central Valley, most specifically Kern County and Bakersfield. It is an area Haslam knows well. He was raised there, was a high school classmate of Merle Haggard, and has used the region as raw material in many short stories and essays.

The people he writes about are ranchers, oilfield roughnecks, rodeo cowboys, and field hands, to name a few. *Snapshots* is about people who don't

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

ECCTYC on the Master Plan

By the time this column reaches print it is possible that the Master Plan Commission will have already published its final report on community colleges. However, lest you think ECCTYC has not been monitoring and/or participating in the activities of the Commission, I would like to review some of our stands and inform you of our rationale for taking such positions.

In the first place, we are convinced that the Master Plan Commission, not

the Joint Legislative Committee, is the group with the real influence. The Governor appointed the membership, and the Commission will report directly to him. Since the Legislative Committee is acting independent of the Governor, if and when a disagreement arises, the Governor will certainly side with his Commission. Districts and organizations spending more time trying to influence the Joint Legislative Committee at this early stage of the process are, it seems, engaging in an exercise in futility.

Let us look at the three items under consideration: community colleges teaching remedial courses on four-year campuses, community college regional boards, and community college teacher credentialing. Though these issues do not affect only English instruction on community college campuses, they certainly will affect the English programs.

First, there is the problem of community colleges becoming involved in contracts to staff remedial programs on four-year campuses. The current program in effect between San Diego City College and San Diego State University (UCSD) is indeed a model program in many ways. However, it is certainly not a model to be accepted statewide. Such a program will work only if the community college attendance figures have plummeted and the four-year enrollment has soared; if the two campuses have generally compatible calendars; if the two English departments involved initiate and develop all aspects of the program in a spirit of cooperative equality; if the agreement reached has an escape clause, allowing the community college to curtail or even withdraw from the cooperative program should enrollment at the community college once again approach or reach CAP level. Though the San Diego program presently works for both campuses, it would not necessarily work in other areas of the state because conditions are not the same everywhere. It is amusing that the arrangement involving San Diego City College is given so much attention when that between San Diego Mesa College and UCSD is studiously ignored. Though the same community college district is involved in both programs, similar conditions were not imposed on both; as a result, the program involving Mesa is a colossal failure—and is, therefore, seldom mentioned.

Second, we should look at the concept of regional community college boards. At first, the talk was to organize all campuses under one state board, similar to the University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) organizational patterns. Districts vociferously opposed such a move, rightfully seeing it as removing the last vestige of local control/influence over community colleges and as paving the way for a bland sameness among community colleges. However, the concept of regional boards, when floated, did not elicit a similar response; yet the end effect will be much the same. There will be an end to differing organizational constructs, differing salary schedules, differing

programs, differing budgetary systems, etc. The end result will be the same uniformity as if there were but one statewide board.

Then there is the entire question of credentialing. The Commission wants to do away with the credential in an attempt to make us more "collegiate," more like the UC and CSU systems. What the Commission seems incapable of understanding is the great difference between hiring procedures at community colleges and at four-year institutions.

(Continued on Page 12)

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The Community Colleges . . .

by GORDON TAYLOR
Yuba College

The new legislative year is just now underway, the Legislature having reconvened from its Interim Study recess. It is working on various proposals and bills and beginning the massive task of reviewing the Governor's proposed budget. Two different items, however, are perhaps of more current interest: Joshua Smith and his ideas and the first draft of the Master Plan Commission's report to the Joint Legislative Committee, which I will only mention briefly.

Joshua Smith, appointed last summer the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges (CC's), delivered last November at the Claremont Graduate School of Education what appears to be a major policy speech in which he set forth many ideas and a few challenges. In the months prior to this lecture, he had, before a number of different groups (sort of testing the waters, as the phrase goes), presented bits and pieces of what he now presented in a more formal way, although he repeated here some of what he said to the Academic Senate of the California CC's at its conference in October and on which I also reported in the December 1985 issue of *i.e.* What follows is what I hope is a fair and fairly brief summary of his remarks.

Chancellor Smith entitled his lecture "Community College Education in the New Millenium," a rather more forward-looking phrase than the more limited "the twenty-first century," which has lost much of its force through overuse. He wants to convey, in his own grandiloquent style, that "just as the old medieval universities are the temples of learning which have witnessed impassively the evolution and convolutions of western civilization, so are the modern community colleges natural repositories of their millenial ivy and an example of tradition transmutating to serve the educational needs of the age of technology." He readily admits that these are grandiose and lofty words.

It is quite obvious that all is not well at the CC's: "I refuse to quietly allow the knife wielders to cut the financial jugular . . . and sacrifice the future of our state's young . . . to stand aside while waste, mismanagement, lack of imagination, and fear of change are allowed to run some of our institutions on a suicidal drive worthy of the self-deluded who can't let go of discredited notions about the 'good old days.'" He says that he is aware of "the glaring needs of an educational system searching for an identity from within, while simultaneously attacked from without for having the good sense of undergoing a healthy existential crisis." He sympathizes with "those who have been caught in the middle of a war that is foreign to their needs and interests": faculty members and students, "the hundreds of thousands of Californians who daily explore the universes within themselves, devoting their most precious resource, the time that is their lives, to the pursuit of an education which to most is a symbol and a vehicle for personal growth and social progress." The attacks and criticisms come from the various media, the faculty, the students of "those magical four-year institutions" that make us feel as though we are "stuck at a second-rate school, getting a second-best education which condemns you to become a second-class citizen. But enough, . . . enough!"

He goes on to point out that California's CC's were the nation's leaders, "unparalleled in access, quality, diversity," a model to all the states and "to many nations, in democratizing higher education"; and to review the history of how, first, the junior colleges and, later, the community colleges came into existence and how, in that history, we "may see the seeds of the present debate about the mission of the CC's. At first, some universities separated their lower division from their school and set up junior colleges, a system later abandoned. Later, the JC's were attached to high schools as thirteenth and fourteenth grades, which also became involved in vocational, or terminal, education. We are now confronted with the same questions the earlier people were: Are we extensions of high schools? Are we collegiate institutions?" Mr. Smith says that "we are extensions of high schools insofar as the lower divisions of universities are" and that we are collegiate institutions "insofar as the lower divisions of universities are." He states that the CC's "are centers of post-secondary collegiate education. And I hope we don't spend the next seventy-five years arguing over this silly point."

. . . The New Chancellor's Call to Action

Chancellor Smith presents about a dozen specific suggestions or perhaps, more appropriately, challenges; some will surprise no one, others are fairly radical; some of these will be hailed by some people and archly contested by others: 1) We should be both a degree granting and a transfer institution. 2) We should change the way we are governed, more in the way of the University of California and the California State University. 3) Tenure and its nature should be radically redefined. 4) Hiring and evaluations should be controlled

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News From Our Regions

REGION VI: CENTRAL COASTAL

Directors: Tony Gilleran, Santa Barbara City College; Judy Markline, Allan Hancock College.

Moorpark College English instructor **MICHAEL STRUMPF** had a dream nine years ago about having a grammar hotline. "As a lark," he announced that the college had the hotline in operation; the next day the switchboard burned out because of all the calls.

Today, Strumpf receives three hundred to four hundred calls a week on his answering machine in his office. He's received calls from Hawaii, France, England, Japan, and Germany, and several from the White House. "My first call was from one of Jimmy Carter's aides. He wanted to know whether to close a letter with 'respectfully' or 'respectably.'" Strumpf also gets calls about how to spell a word, how to pronounce a word, what is the correct syntax or use of hyphens and apostrophes, and what is the best word to go in a certain spot.

As a result of his Grammar Hotline, Strumpf has appeared on national radio and television shows and has written a best-selling grammar book—*Painless, Perfect Grammar*, published by Simon and Schuster in 1985.

Michael Strumpf and his Grammar Hotline can be reached at (805) 529-2321.

JACK MILES, Allan Hancock College instructor, recently had an article accepted by *Field and Stream*. To be published in the June 1986 issue, his article suggests that for solitude and good fishing, one must backpack early. Miles is a 1984 Fellow of the South Coast Writing Project (SCWriP).

ROSE BROWN, BOB ISAACSON and **JUDY MARKLINE** (also former SCWriP Fellows and present instructors at Allan Hancock) have co-authored a textbook—*Out Loud on Paper: Thinking, Discovering, Writing*—that will be published in fall 1986 by Holt, Rinehart and Winston. **JUDY MARKLINE** also had an article—"Peer Tutors in the Two-Year College"—in the December issue of the *Writing Lab Newsletter*, published at Purdue University. In addition to her recent writing, Markline will serve as associate chair of a workshop session at the CCCC Convention in New Orleans this month. Chaired by Richard Lanham (UCLA), this panel presentation will explore "The Rhetoric of Conversation: Bakhtin, Barthes, and Freud."

REGION VII: NORTH LOS ANGELES

REGION VII: NORTH LOS ANGELES

Directors: Jo Ray McCuen, Glendale Community College; Lloyd Thomas, Los Angeles Mission College.

KAREN SUE GROSZ, instructor in the English Department at Santa Monica College, has been selected as one of the 160 nationally chosen women educators to participate in an institute for Leadership Development sponsored by the League for Innovation in Community Colleges and the American Association of Women in Community and Junior Colleges and Rio Salado Community College. Her project, as required for the leadership program, is to develop a faculty handbook and to develop a handbook for high school students transferring to a community college.

REGION VIII: SOUTH LOS ANGELES

Directors: Robert Dees, Orange Coast College; Lois Powers, Fullerton College.

An article based on her experiences with students has been added to the long list of literary publications by **JOANNE GRAY KASHDAN**, English instructor at Golden West College. According to Kashdan, she is the only community college instructor to contribute to the volume *Approaches to Teaching Ibsen's A Doll House*, part of the Approaches to Teaching Masterpieces of World Literature series sponsored by the Modern Language Association's Committee on Teaching and Related Professional Activities.

Kashdan believes that her contribution will help the community colleges' reputation for scholarship: "I want the world to know that in the community colleges we have a scholarly approach to much of our teaching." Her article, "*A Doll's House* in a Community College," is based on her experiences teaching the play to students in her English 110—Introduction to Literature: Composition—course.

ECCTYC Resolutions

The following resolutions were passed unanimously by the ECCTYC Board of Directors at its Fall Meeting, 21-23 November 1985.

RESOLUTION: SUPPORT OF LARC'S "FIELD DRAFT PROPOSAL"

RESOLVED that ECCTYC endorses the goals, directions, and purposes of LARC's "Field Draft Proposal" as an alternative to establishing an academic floor.

RESOLUTION: REMEDIAL FUNDING/REMEDIAL LOAD

WHEREAS, community colleges are expected to prepare underprepared students to meet the literacy standards required for success in college courses and to meet the level of skill expected by employers; and

WHEREAS, current community college funding methods fail to provide adequate support in both instruction and services to meet the standards and expectations of the community; and

WHEREAS, most community college remedial programs lack the resources to provide adequate program assessment of student achievement in reading and writing skills; and

WHEREAS, good writing programs must require students to write frequently and must require faculty to provide regular critiques of that writing; *be it therefore*

RESOLVED that ECCTYC urge the Board of Governors, in concert with the Legislature, to provide categorical funding at ½ greater than the base ADA to support remedial programs for students underprepared in reading and writing skills; and *be it further*

RESOLVED that such a categorical funding program include these elements:

1. The college has established an acceptable placement process in reading and writing;
2. The college submits a plan for assessing and monitoring student progress; and
3. The college agrees to maximum class size of 20 students per section.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

(Continued from Page 11)

At UC and CSU, departments hire; we but recommend, and depending on local administrations and local politics, those recommendations may be ignored. Unless the plan to phase out

credentials is accompanied by the vesting of direct hiring authority in departments, hiring will become an even greater hotbed of administrative nepotism than presently exists on many campuses.

I have devoted this column to three issues. However, there are others: common statewide placement testing for entering students, funding of matriculation processes, transfer of grievance procedures from EERA (Education Employment Relations Act) to HEERA (Higher Education Employment Relations Act), the lengthening of probationary periods for instructors, deciding what constitutes remediation and how much remediation a student can receive, etc. Probably, the two additional items that will have the most impact on English programs are the idea of a common, statewide English placement examination and the decision on what constitutes appropriate remediation. As the Commission takes clearer stands on these items, we will devote future columns to these issues. Now is not the time for any of us involved in community colleges to relax our vigilance in monitoring the Commission's activities. Whatever decisions are made and are accepted in Sacramento will be in effect for the next twenty to twenty-five years. For many of us, that length of time will be longer than the remainder of our teaching careers. It is up to us to see that a group of interested citizens and legislators are properly informed of our needs, difficulties, and desires. If we don't do this, who will?

JIM CAGNACCI
City College of San Francisco

REVIEWS

(Continued from Page 10)

talk "good," who drive battered—that is, working—pickups and work at tough jobs so their kids won't have to. Having said that, it is important to add that Haslam does not treat these people in a way that is either reverentially dehumanizing or condescending.

Although Haslam writes about this region and its people, he is not a regionalist chronicling everyday life in the Central Valley. Neither was Faulkner when he wrote about Mississippi. And like Faulkner, Haslam's themes are more universal: the separate peace a rancher dying of cancer makes with himself and the world, a young black man who is redeemed from the present by the discovery of his past, a field hand whose "call" from God forces him into an existential battle between good and evil.

Perhaps the key to Haslam's particular vision is in the collection's subtitle: *Glimpses of the Other California*. At first, one thinks of that in terms of a place that hasn't yet found its orchards and fields turned into malls and condos; of main streets which still have character and are not highways no man dares cross filled with assaults on the eye, ear, and stomach; or of a place not yet invaded by a new breed of carpetbaggers who want to turn every small town into what they left behind.

But this is not the point of *Snapshots*. The "other" California referred to is the one that does not live in a perpetual present, but a present which also contains a past. For anyone growing up in California after World War II, the past is increasingly difficult to find and more greatly to be cherished.

Most of these stories are about the past in confrontation with the present. These confrontations are sometimes bizarre, funny, or tragic collisions of then and now, "us" and "them," permanence and change. In "His Ways Are Mysterious," a field hand answers God's call to be His prophet and confronts not only the flower children of a guru, but his own evil self in the Nogales Saloon.

Like any good artist, his focus is on the human condition, and he has shown here that nobody has a corner on wisdom or folly, good or evil, truth or deceit. These people are not noble, quaint, or ugly—just terribly proud and completely human.

In these fourteen stores, Haslam shows us that the "other California" is the one *we* live in—fifty years after the "Okies," fifty years after the small rancher, fifty years after you were born and died in the same town.

Beyond the content of these stories, *Snapshots* amply displays Haslam's abilities as a writer to experiment with form and style. One gets pleasure from how the stories are written as well as *what* is being said. Some, like "Matinee" and "My Dear Mr. Thorp," have unconventional structures. Others, such as "Vengeance," "Trophies," and "Flesh and Blood," rely on more classical approaches to the short story.

His stories stay with you and do what literature should do: affect and move you as in this passage from one of the stories in this collection, "That Constant Coyote":

"I've lived too long and held the sticky hands of too many grandchildren, stood and watched day slide into earth like a sharpened shovel while our generations elapsed. I've gazed ahead into a past as jagged as the crazed castrato calls of evening coyotes. My own coyote, the very one whose song had haunted my sleep as well as my stock—only days after a state hunter had poisoned him and buzzards had disrobed his bones—appeared this morning in triplicate, gloriously alive, from a den above our high pasture on Breckenridge Mountain: the same flesh multiplied, pups probably wiser because of their father's recent fatal mistake. Despairing for my feathers and my wool, I welcomed the old scamp back, even tripled. State hunter be damned. Age teaches you to appreciate characters as much as character."

Snapshots has a lot of both characters and character. As such it is a significant work by a significant author.

☐ Haslam, Gerald. *Snapshots: Glimpses of the Other California*. Walnut Creek, CA: Devil Mountain Books, 1985. 120 pages, $7.95.

Walt McCallum teaches in the Communication Studies Department at Santa Rosa College.

ORDERING THE POETIC WORLD

by JAMES KRUSOE
Santa Monica College

I imagine the pleasure of putting together anthologies or reading lists to be much the same as picking favorite records or selecting all-star teams. It's an ordering of the world, of course, soothing, and we feel in control. All of which is to say this new anthology is a very pleasant and respectable ordering. There aren't major deviations from traditional ideas of who's important and who's not, and the poems selected to represent each poet make a nice balance between ones we might have chosen ourselves, the poems that just have to be there, and others lesser known that come as a happy surprise. And if occasionally I said outloud, "Who!" or "Why?" there were happy discoveries as well. Edwin Muir, who, for example, I would have never listed as a poet I can't live without, has two poems, one so-so but the other a real gift.

So, the poems here are solid, responsible, and mostly free of clunkers, though there seemed a few. The other thing that pleased me about the book was the prefaces. They are an intelligent blend of biography with just enough nicely turned judgments to give a nudge toward interpretation. For example, writing on Pound's *Cantos* (with the thirteenth and the forty-seventh as examples!): ". . . critical opinion is still very divided about it. The least one could claim for it is that many passages have startling power and beauty; along with much that is dross or worse, there is a moving quest for values and insight. The density of Pound's language and the intricate interweaving of his motifs is such that the poem is inexhaustible." Fair enough.

In fact, it all seems fair enough, especially if you can imagine teaching a course that includes over 170 different poets in a term or two. (I'll leave it to you to calculate how many per day that is.)

As an anthology, as the preface puts it, "intended for students who are being introduced to poetry at the college level," this seems a fine text. Still, I must confess, what remains is the image of those poor geese, each with a funnel stuck down its throat and being stuffed with corn and still more corn, just to make a nice pate one day. I'm not sure it's the best way to introduce anyone to anything.

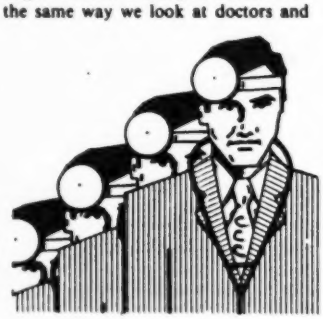
☐ Bate, W. Jackson and David Perkins. *British and American Poets: Chaucer to the Present*. NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1986. 1048 pages, $18.95.

Jim Krusoe teaches creative writing and poetry at California State University, Northridge, and Santa Monica College. He received an NEA Fellowship for 1984 for poetry and has written several books of poetry.

CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

(Continued from Page 1)

development. We should do this for ourselves, to nourish us, but we should do it also to provide the best possible service to our students/consumers. We might consider looking at ourselves in the same way we look at doctors and lawyers; we select our doctors and lawyers based on the caliber of their preparation and on the quality of the treatment or service they render their clients. Faculty development helps assure that our "clients" receive the highest quality of service (teaching) from the highest caliber of professional.



I believe firmly that the quality of community college teaching is without equal. At the same time, I believe that staff development nurtures us, stimulates us, and invigorates us as professionals and as persons. I advocate staff development because responsible teaching is demanding and draining, and we need—no, we deserve—the sustenance staff development provides.

PURPOSE

The renaissance I foresee demands an understanding of the purpose and philosophy of community college education. We must call to mind those ideals that give purpose to higher education and must renew their meaning for us, for public policy makers, and for our students. Education is integral to the quality of life for both the individual and for society and allows the population to become informed participants in the society and responsible shareholders in the civilization. These ideals may seem lofty, even remote and inane, but they are the reasons why education exists and why the public bears the expense for it. We teach for

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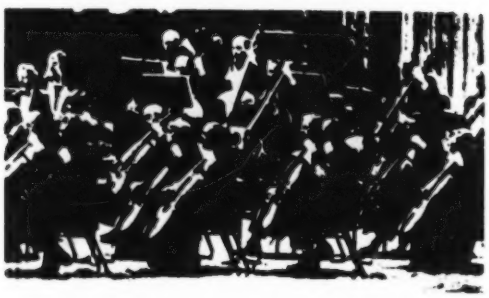
CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

(Continued from Page 13)

idealistic reasons, colleges exist for idealistic reasons, and we ought to embrace rather than be embarrassed by that idealism.

Three hundred years ago, Comenius, the Czech theologian and philosopher, expressed his view of education: "Our wish is that all men be fully educated, to full humanity. Not any one individual, not a few, or even many, but all men, together and singly, young and old, rich and poor, of high and low birth, men



and women, in a word, all those whose fate it is to be born human beings, so that at least the whole of the human race becomes educated, men of all ages, all conditions, both sexes and all nations." And when we have renewed that sense of purpose, I ask that we also call to mind the means by which those ideals were to be taught—through the humanities. I therefore urge that the humanities be restored to their central place in the curriculum.

Secretary of Education William Bennett, paraphrasing Matthew Arnold, advocated that students share a common experience of "the best that has been said, thought, written, or otherwise expressed about the human experience." Secretary Bennett also asserted that "on too many campuses the curriculum has become a self-service cafeteria through which students pass without being nourished." The need to restore humanities to the central place in the college curriculum and the need for staff development to assure the highest quality teaching is particularly crucial for community colleges, for 87 percent of all credit hours taken in the humanities are taken in the freshman and sophomore years—the very years taught at the community colleges.

Surely it is appropriate for us as English teachers to lead the renaissance in good teaching and the advocacy for the humanities, but all disciplines should join the effort. And the effort should begin not by seeking reasons why humanities enrollments have decreased recently but by seeking reasons why those enrollments should increase in the future. Faculty must make a major commitment to teaching humanities, institutions should support that effort, and the Legislature must assume fiscal responsibility for this preeminent educational purpose.

PROFESSIONALISM

Finally, I urge the community college faculty to unite in creating a renaissance of pride and professionalism in community college education and in community college teaching.

One way to increase professionalism and pride is to recognize that community colleges are institutions of higher education and that our faculty should have a role like that of other professors in higher education. The faculty should have primary responsibility for curriculum matters, for establishing and maintaining academic standards, and for proposing policy in academic and professional areas. In other words, responsibility for the academic health and quality of the institution should be vested in the faculty. In addition, the faculty should assume responsibility for setting standards for employment; for hiring, evaluating, and promoting peers; and for recommending tenure. At the same time faculty should assume full responsibility for the quality of teaching and be accountable for it. I advocate this collegial model not just to give more authority to the faculty but to promote the best interests of community college education.

Some administrators may not like the collegial model because they see it usurping their authority; some faculty may not like it because it means more work and dictates assuming accountability for oneself and for others. However, I advocate this new role for faculty because it moves us toward increased professionalism and acknowledges that we are a part of higher education, not a part of the K-12 system. Finally, I advocate this collegial model because when faculty have the major responsibility for the academic and professional matters of their institution, their stake in the credibility of that institution increases as does their stake in the credibility of the profession—to the benefit of both. Adoption of a collegial model is a key step in the renaissance of pride and professionalism in community college education.

FACULTY MORALE

I see another area where renaissance is needed, and it is a more personal area. Events of recent years have undermined our sense of the value of what we do. The momentum created by Proposition 13, the 30 million dollar hit list, and years of underfunding have adversely affected faculty morale. We must recapture our faith in the value of what we do. We need to remember that teaching, particularly in English, does positively affect lives. When we impart critical and analytical thinking skills, we are helping our students think more clearly and more incisively—skills, that in the most optimistic view, help perpetuate Jeffersonian ideals. We need to step back for a moment and see the Gestalt, the whole picture, and recall that education is central to the quality of life for the individual and the society and that we, as community college educators, are valuable contributors to that quality.

RENAISSANCE

I selected the theme of renaissance because I truly believe that it can and will happen, that the community colleges will once again become the most illustrious system in the world. But I have another reason for selecting that theme. I am damned sick and tired of the criticism of us in the media, in the Legislature, and from within our community college family. And I intend to capitalize on my anger and have it work for me to help create the renaissance of my vision. It will mean work and it will mean responsibility, but I am going to do it.

I ask all readers of *inside english* to join me in that effort. Let us begin by acknowledging to ourselves the value of what we do and then demand respect for our work from the Legislature, the public, our colleagues at four-year institutions, and our students. Let us also reaffirm and promulgate the ideals that are the foundation of education and remind others of the worth of those ideals. Let us look at ourselves, our methods, and our curriculum and make each the very best it can be. Let us insist on being treated in a collegial manner and demand our proper role in the governance of our colleges. Let's not just prepare for the renaissance—let us create that renaissance together.

—

Jonnah Laroche teaches in the English Department at Allan Hancock College. During the 1982-83 academic year she was president of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges. In 1983 she was nominated to the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, on which she still serves as chair of its Educational Policies Committee.

A SUMMARY OF SESSIONS

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CSU WRITING PROGRAMS:

Presenter: LINDA YOUNG,
Composition Director, CSU Sacramento

This dense and energetic session dealt first with the California State University's response to UC Berkeley's composition requirements (CSU Sacramento has

largely ignored them), second with remediation at CSU campuses, and last with approaches to composition used by the CSU Sacramento English Department.

Concerning remediation, Dr. Young noted that CSU had embarked on a curious two-fold path: CSU plans to reduce remediation substantially by 1990 while it is spending millions for new remedial courses this year. (Young noted that some CSU students read at the third-grade level.) All CSU students must pass *two* writing exams: about 60 percent do. But given the goals for 1990, she fears all remediation will be "dumped on" the community colleges, who may have no additional funding to provide it!

Young has observed that community college transfers are more adept at narrative than at expository writing. To help students develop their expository skills, she recommends three books: Richard Larsen's *Writing as Discourse*, Linda Flower's *Problem-Solving Strategies for Writers* (3rd ed.), and Linda Flower and John Hay's *How Professional Writers Revise*. She also believes that marginal comments in the form of dialogue (*e.g.* "I am not following you") tell the student more about what needs to be revised than pronouncements like "unclear" or "awkward."

—NICK ROBERTS
Cabrillo College

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inside english **DEADLINES**

MAY 1986
Developmental Writing Issue
5 April 1986

OCTOBER 1986
Composition Issue
15 August 1986

SACRAMENTO SCENE

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by the faculty (the faculty, in short, should professionalize itself). 5) Credentials should be abolished, and qualifications should be set by the Board of Governors (BG). 6) Colleges should set up departmental and college curriculum committees; 7) should have committees on academic quality, institutional research, students' outcomes, and should raise probationary standards; 8) should matriculate the students to give them access and the opportunity to succeed. 9) He recommends establishing a degree of Associate in Applied Arts, and 10) re-establishing strong programs and requirements in the liberal arts (the humanities). 11) We should bring all segments of higher education together in some kind of partnership and some system of collaboration rather than follow our separate functions as delineated by the original Master Plan. 12) We should set up some joint program with the high schools to ferret out those students who need remedial help before they leave the high schools.

Governance, tenure, hiring, evaluations, and credentials would probably change the internal running of the colleges more than any of the proposals. Matriculation, academic quality, the AAS degree, and requirements in the liberal arts would affect the students more than the others. Here are some of the details:

—We are still governed by many of the high schools' rules; "we have an emasculated Board of Governors . . . with some awesome responsibilities and puny authority." The Chancellor's Office is completely controlled by the state's civil service bureaucracy with its regulations and expectations. We are hamstrung, Mr. Smith says, by the Legislature, a sort of super school board, and the state's bureaucracy; "educational policy and personal policy [are] dictated by the same mechanisms that govern the General Services Administration or the Water Resources Board." Major changes are required. The state should retain plenary control of the system, a word he emphasizes, decide the broad mission, generally define its relationship to the other segments of education (note the general term), decide how to pay for it, and determine its appropriate revenues. The BG should have the same status as the respective boards of UC and CSU who make policy, decide how monies are spent, determine curriculum—many things that the Legislature now does for the CC's. The colleges should operate themselves through the oversight of districts or regions, be responsible to their communities and to the BG. By as early as 1987, each college should have devised a governance charter that outlines how the faculty and students would participate in governing their respective college: a collegial governance charter, no more a stand-off between the faculty and the administration.

—Teachers should have tenure only in a department, not in the college, and the probationary period should last longer, perhaps four, five, six years. The CC's should behave like institutions of higher education. The faculty should search for the new teachers to be hired,

make recommendations to the president, review and evaluate colleagues from the beginning, and, through this process, recommend teachers for tenure.

—The current course-specific credentials should be abolished. California is the only state that still requires them. The BG would issue broad guidelines to define teachers' necessary qualifications that would then be administered at the local college level by departments and academic senates.

—"Access and opportunity are and will continue to be our basic philosophy. We will not impose admission barriers to those who may profit from education." Mr. Smith suggests adopting a system of matriculation much like the one we have been discussing these few years.

—On academic quality, he would raise the students' probationary standard to a grade point average of 2.0 from the current 1.75. He would establish an associate degree of arts and sciences (AAS). He does not consider it to be a second class degree, for he has, in fact, seen a transfer rate of 70 percent among those who earn one.

—Chancellor Smith would also sweepingly reform education in the liberal arts. He believes that the poor academic performances of many of our students are directly related to the marked decline in the teaching of the liberal arts, almost eliminating them as requirements as well as from the curriculum. He describes the liberal arts as those subjects that introduce "our students into a variety of ways in which humans have found it appropriate, useful, and profitable to organize and structure their experience of the world and understand their own place in it"; those "'disciplines of knowledge': science, arts, music, philosophy, history, mathematics, etc." As minimum requirements in these subjects, he recommends for the AA degree forty semester units, for the AS degree thirty units, and for the AAS degree twenty-five units. "The view that our community college students, because they are embarked on programs of vocational study that will provide them with skills that will have almost immediate commercial translation, need not, for that reason, study the humanities, is a view that should disturb us all. . . . To regard the vocational training of our . . . students as primary and their humanistic education as ornamental is to sabotage the purpose of education: it is to turn out successful, efficient functionaries and, in doing so, treat our students as if their place in this world is not worth their thinking about."

If Chancellor Smith is to bring any of these ideas to fruition, there would be, indeed, major changes in the structure, operation, and results of the CC's, which might also cause some changes in the general attitudes toward them. The Master Plan Review Commission (MPRC) has now finished its first draft, which includes many of these same suggestions. The Commission's final report to the Legislature's Joint Committee for the Review of the Master Plan is not due until the end of February or the beginning of March, but most of the substantive changes have already been made. I think, however, that we had just as well wait for the final report before we go into a long analysis of it. Also we do not as yet know what the Legislature will do with it. It reviews only the CC's, and some, many, all of its recommendations could not be set up right away. On the other hand, the MPRC will now begin a review of all three segments of higher education to see what needs to be changed in relation to them all, and we might not see very many changes until they finish that job a year from now.

Meanwhile, keep your Powdermilk Biscuits dry, eat your Raw Bits, and if it doesn't work the first time, get a Bigger Hammer.

A SUMMARY OF SESSIONS

(Continued from Page 14)

HOW STUDENTS LEARN TO WRITE BY READING

Presenter: MARY YOUNG WILLIAMS, Associate Director of the South Bay Writing Project.

Mary Young Williams, an eighth-grade teacher, got a dose of what college instructors experience during the first week of classes when students are shopping for courses: about a third of the session left when she announced that she was a junior high teacher, and another third left when she announced that she would discuss children's literature as a method of generating writing ideas. Those who left missed a spirited discussion of how simple literary works can help generate ideas for writing: first, by making students "feel safe" and, second, by "immersing them in language."

Ms. Williams made a plausible case for the notion that the "primacy of oral language"—story telling—is sufficient to generate both good discussions and good writing. She used the association-making technique of clustering to show how she leads students to differentiate between the abstract and the concrete, and she stressed throughout the session that immersing students in the process of writing is much more important than burdening them with grammatical and rhetorical terminology.

—NICK ROBERTS
Cabrillo College

REMEDIAL ENGLISH: REVISITED AND RECREATED

Presenters: MARIANNE BORETZ, Los Angeles City College; ROSE NAJAR, East Los Angeles College; and LLOYD THOMAS, Los Angeles Mission College.

Using a newly published Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) text, *In Charge*, students will practice sentence-combining, stylistic imitation, and grammar exercises that enable them to summarize, analyze, and synthesize the content of their reading.

The project was designed by twelve community college instructors working under a grant funded by UCLA's Office of Academic Interinstitutional Programs and the LACCD. Their goal was to find an alternate approach to the traditional programmed instruction methods used in most remedial courses.

"All aspects of the text (*In Charge*, developed under the grant)—the readings, writing assignments, and grammar instruction—are connected to meaning. Students learn how to extract meaning from high-interest academic reading selections. From these readings they experience, and then reproduce in their own writing, the ways that meaning is organized in disciplines such as history, psychology, and cultural geography" [Jo An Simmons, "Remedial English: Revisited and Recreated," *inside english*, May 1985, p.3]. According to the presenters, student interest has increased as a result of their using this method and this text, and the students' analytical skills have improved greatly.

—LINDA NIBLEY
Glendale Community College

(Continued on Page 16)

A SUMMARY OF SESSIONS

(Continued from Page 15)

GENERATING SENTENCES THAT GENERATE IDEAS

Presenter: ROD SIEGFRIED,
American River College

A very skillful presentation by Rod Siegfried demonstrated the techniques of the "Christensen Sentence." It was truly a "write-on" workshop demonstrating the techniques of writing the cumulative sentence. Participants in the workshop wrote sentences using examples provided by Siegfried, including mechanical, moving toys to provide the stimulus that his students observe when they move out of the classroom to observe the world in action. The sentences that the participants produced were interesting and varied, and helped us see the possibilities of helping the student move from the simplistic or ordinary

sentence patterns to more interesting patterns in the cumulative sentence mode.

As Siegfried himself explains:

"I was first introduced to Generative Rhetoric (*Notes Toward a New Rhetoric*, 1967) by Bill Robinson when I was in his program at San Francisco State. I've been teaching (and writing) Christensen-type sentences for the past eleven years, tinkering with the source, constructing sequences that I feel most comfortable using with different levels of students.

"The Cumulative Sentence is dynamic, typically American (in the best sense), promoting discovery as it lets the reader into the working mind of the writer. This sentence is based on the 'loose' sentence, the main clause, short and simple, advancing the narration, description, or idea in general or abstract terms, the modifiers then moving back toward the main clause to clarify, specify.

"I prefer to use four models, which I'll discuss briefly below. First, however, I want to emphasize the importance of giving students *lots* of sample sentences for each model you teach; you should follow this up by having students write *lots* of sentences for each model. In the models, A-D below, note the arrows indicating direction of movement or modification, one of the major principles in Christensen:

Model A: Main Clause + Verbal Phrase

e.g. The coach looked down, kicking some rocks on the sideline, pondering his team's dismal performance.

Model B:
Main Clause + Absolute Phrase

e.g. The day was bitterly cold, a frozen sleet covering the ground.

Model C:
Main Clause (Noun) + Adjective Cluster

e.g. The old road, potholed and cluttered, was nearly impossible to drive.

Model D:
Main Clause + Noun Phrase (Appositive)

e.g. The unseen gods, the powers behind the world of phenomenal appearance, began to stalk through his dreams.

(Loren Eisely)

"Christensen was apparently driven by a desire to let his students into the game, to teach them the rules, something he felt was simply not done at the sentence level—that is, although teachers know good sentences when they see them, they don't teach their students how to write the kinds of sentences professionals write. By teaching our students the effective and appropriate use of cumulative sentences for variety, we will be letting them into the game, and, a great benefit to us, we will be teaching them to write sentences we love to read."

—JOHN CALLEN
City College of San Francisco

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ENGLISH COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA ECCTYC TWO YEAR COLLEGES

inside english

Vol. XIII, No. 4 | Journal of the English Council of California Two-Year Colleges | May 1986

INSIDE

inside english

ECCTYC Looks at Developmental Writing

To help developmental students "move beyond the basics" two instructors used modeling as their primary teaching method, with Maya Angelou's *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* as the primary focus of the class. Page 3

inside english welcomes a new column to its pages. "Inside the Writing Center," which makes its debut in this issue, provides a forum for those directing and working in writing labs and writing centers. One instructor discusses her belief in peer tutors and another describes a new writing lab. Page 5

inside english also welcomes its new poetry editor—and one of his poems. Page 11

What are your sources of inspiration and help in teaching? Cathy Hicks shares her methods, textbooks, and materials for teaching developmental writing. Page 4

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Downstate ..... Page 8

A FIVE-STEP PLAN
How to Sell Your Remedial Program

by GLORIA REID
Ohlone College
and Diablo Valley College

Remedial education at the post-secondary level is coming under increasing scrutiny. We who work with remedial students need to go on the offensive and produce specific numbers and statistics to prove that what we do enables students to become successful in their content courses, finish degrees and vocational programs, and gain productive employment. The public, the legislature, and governing boards are in a mood for educational reform; we need to plan our own reforms and present them with impressive backup research before outsiders initiate the reforms for us. Yet, who among us has time to do this research?

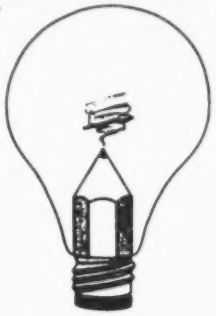
Last year, I wrote a master's thesis on reading programs in community colleges. In my research and visitations, I learned several things that might be of use in convincing legislators, administrators, and governing boards that remediation not only is effective but also brings greater revenue into colleges.

All educators realize that more students are entering postsecondary institutions with less preparation. Hunter and Harman (1979) reported that 23 million Americans, one in five adults, lack the reading, writing, and computation abilities needed to handle the minimum demands of daily living, and an additional 34 million are able to

function but not proficiently. According to Roueche and Armes (1980), 57 million Americans, about one in five, lack the skills to perform basic tasks, which might include addressing a letter or interpreting a bus schedule. In addition,

> More than half the students now entering community colleges read below the eighth grade level, a decline of at least two grade levels since 1971. Even more distressing, we can estimate with some certainty that 20 to 35 percent of these new college students are functionally illiterate (reading at or below the fourth grade level) and that the return rate of minority students to community colleges after one year is only one in nine (Roueche and Armes, 1980: 21).

If we choose to matriculate these students (and where will they go if we do not?), then we must provide effective programs to remediate their deficiencies so that these students can be successful in content courses and vocational programs.



Numerous studies show that students who take a reading course early in their college careers successfully complete more units and have a higher grade-point average than students in control groups. In well-designed developmental programs, a semester of work can provide requisite skills, can raise reading levels three or four years, and can improve self concepts and study habits (Roueche and Armes, 1980). Romoser's 1978 study of fifty-seven developmental programs in Ohio showed that in almost all cases, academic performance clearly improved when students enrolled in a developmental course. Information gathered over a four-year period at Westmoreland Community College in Pennsylvania indicated that underprepared students who enrolled in prescribed developmental programs had significantly higher grade point averages, completed thirty more units at the college (excluding developmental course credits), and had a graduation rate 32 percent higher than underprepared students who did not enroll in such coursework (Cicco and Associates, 1979).

Denman (1983) reports that a core group of high-risk freshmen at San Diego State University who enrolled in a developmental reading and writing course to supplement their natural science course achieved a higher grade point average in the class than either the non-risk students in the same section or

members of an alternate section of the class. In addition, the core group increased 32 percent on the McGraw-Hill reading test while the two control groups improved 17 percent and 8 percent respectively. Santa and Truscott (1979) likewise report far greater improvement in both reading scores and content course grades for underprepared students who enrolled at Douglass College and Rutgers University in developmental coursework to supplement content coursework than in control groups that did not take such coursework.

At Los Medanos College in Pittsburg, California, remediation is centered around a tutorial program. Content instructors assess students' reading and writing ability during the first week of classes and recommend tutoring for those likely to experience difficulty in coursework. In 1983, Los Medanos compared students who had been recommended for and had taken tutoring to students who were recommended for tutoring and chose not to participate. Among general education students, the group mean grade point average was 2.33 in the specified course for students who received tutoring and 1.67 for those who did not. Vocational education students who were tutored received a grade point average .30 higher than their untutored counterparts. More significantly, withdrawal rate was 7.1 percent lower for general education students who received tutoring than for those not tutored. No withdrawals occurred among vocational education students who received tutoring while 17.8 percent of those who did not participate withdrew. In addition, the study found that those who received the tutoring showed greater gains in

(Continued on Page 7)

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Letters

Dear Editor

MS. BARTH AND MR. AUDEN

W.H. Auden's poem, "The Unknown Citizen," is a witty, sarcastic, and ironic indictment of modern, statistical society's view of its citizens. The poem is written in the third person, which distances the reader from the subject, and echoes the impersonal attitude of a bureaucracy towards an individual.

The above is the opening of an essay written for a final examination in the first term [Fall 1985] of a freshman composition course. By a coincidence or synchronicity I had given my students a copy of Auden's "Unknown Citizen," which we had not studied, as one of several essay questions. Only two students chose that topic, and I send this student's response, in the hope that it may lift the spirits of Melinda Barth and those of us who, like myself, found her article ["Teaching Lit in the Eighties . . . ," *inside english*, 9.2 (Dec. 1985): 1, 10] at once insightful and depressing. What I like to think it may suggest (I am being nothing if not cautious) is that intelligence at any time, like the speed of light, is something of a constant and can as easily cut through the platitudinous, conventional beliefs of today as it did in the 60's. Mass movements, whether in the 60's or 80's, whether hippiesque or conservative, are intrinsically mindless in their endorsements—as in their use of the guillotine. As teachers I suppose it is our lot, ineluctably, to be oppressed by the adamantine wall of platitude that is perceived by many students as the enlightened view of their enlightened epoch. The students who, in the 60's, I overheard on the first day of class talking about bombing the school are the alter-egos of the students who today endorse Auden's statistical man—both participating in the the particular unthink of their day. Intelligence, as exemplified by the author of this essay, never "goes with the flow." This said, I must admit I find the tendencies Ms. Barth mentions particularly chilling: those of us who waited with unconscious trepidation to see the coming of Orwell's 1984 might be inclined to think we breathed a sigh of relief too soon: to read Auden's poem the way Ms. Barth's students read it, given its manifest and heavy irony, is double-think indeed.

DAVID RATNER
Cabrillo College

CULTURE SHOCK

I've recently returned to the U.S. after living and teaching in Ireland for a ten-year period . . . and among other culture shocks, there has been the move from elitist institutions such as Trinity College, Dublin, to night classes in California community colleges. At present I am teaching in the "English X" program at Chabot College-Valley Campus and in the ESL program at Evergreen Valley College—and in spite of some frustrations, I find the work a joy.

What I do miss, terribly, is the sense of a community of like-minded teachers/scholars, and so I was very pleased to happen upon the December issue of *inside english*—I found it informative and provocative. As I am still very new to the system and its complexities, I am perhaps most struck by the underlying issue of capabilities and assumptions which seems to inform every article. With such a diverse student population, the entire question of standards within the system seems to call forth virtually limitless responses—what students should attempt, what they should expect to attempt, what we should—or should not—expect them to attempt. Open admissions, it would seem, brings to the system and to the instructors within it both a challenge and a burden. In my very brief experience, much of the burden seems to be borne by people who bring their past failures into the classroom and have a great deal of difficulty in extricating themselves.

It is true that on some days I think very wistfully of M.A. seminars in Anglo-Irish fiction of the nineteenth century and remember what stimulation and pleasure such sessions gave me. But to date my work in the community colleges has been all about empowerment—harder work, to be sure, and, I hope, work that will filter not only through the lives of my students, but also into their families, friends, and workplaces. In terms of self-esteem, confidence, and sheer acquisition of basic skills, I find this teaching not only to be personally rewarding, but also to be continuously challenging—for students and for myself. I look forward to a long association with *inside english* and hope that future issues will bring as much pleasure as this one brought.

JANET MADDEN-SMITH
Chabot College-Valley Campus
Evergreen College

Notices

Please send information you wish included in Notices to inside english *two months prior to the issue in which the item should appear. Include all pertinent information and a full address for the contact person and a phone number where appropriate.*

PROJECTS FOR "UNDERSTANDING AMERICA"

The National Endowment for the Humanities has announced that it will support a variety of projects to reinvigorate the teaching and learning of American history and literature at all levels of education. The NEH Division of Education Programs seeks proposals for projects to help school systems strengthen their course offerings, to stage institutes for teachers of literature and history, to develop school/college collaboration, and such. Other divisions of NEH will fund fellowships for college facility and other projects.

For proposal guidelines, write the Public Affairs Office, National Endowment for the Humanities, Room 409, 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20056. Jeffrey Thomas (Room 403, NEH) can answer queries about details of the program.

FULBRIGHT LECTURING GRANTS

The Council for International Exchange of Scholars (CIES) has announced that a number of 1986-87 Fulbright Lecturing Grants remain available to United States faculty in the field of American Literature, particularly, and in other disciplines. Faculty in all academic ranks, including emeritus, and independent scholars, are eligible to apply. Applicants are expected to have a Ph.D., college or university teaching experience, and reasonable evidence of scholarly productivity. U.S. Citizenship is required, and in a few countries (of Central and South America and Francophone Africa), knowledge of the host country's language is required.

For information, write CIES, 11 Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20036. (202: 939-5401). When inquiring, indicate countries of interest.

HIGHER DEGREES

The Department of English and the Humanities Program of the University of Texas at Arlington offer MA, MAT, and Ph.D. programs in Rhetoric and Composition designed for students who intend to (among other options) teach writing at community college and university levels. For further information write Victor J. Vitanza, Coordinator of the Division of Rhetoric, English Department, Box 19035, University of Texas at Arlington, Arlington, TX 76019.

Indiana University of Pennsylvania offers an individualized curriculum and a summers-only program for students who are already established teachers to earn a Ph.D. in Rhetoric/Linguistics, a Ph.D. in English or American Literature/Criticism, or an M.A. in Teaching English Composition or in Literature. For further information, write Director of Graduate Programs, Department of English, Leonard 110, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Indiana, Pennsylvania 17505-1094.

CONFERENCES

A LITERACY DEBATE

12-14 June 1986. Literacy Conference. "A Literacy Debate: Reasoning, Style, and Writing." University of San Francisco, San Francisco, CA. Sessions include "Plato, Writing, Print, and Computers" (Walter Ong, SJ University Professor of Humanities); "A Literacy Debate: Dialectic and the Domain of Style" (Richard Lanham, Executive Director of UCLA Writing Programs; Joseph Williams, Professor of English and Linguistics, University of Chicago; and Walter Ong); "The Role of Computers

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MOVING BEYOND THE BASICS

On the Merits of Modeling

by DYAN PIKE
formerly of College of Marin
and
IRENE MENEGAS
Diablo Valley College

When planning a new, comprehensive program in reading, writing, and study skills, we searched for a fresh approach to help our developmental students move beyond the basic levels of comprehending and composing in which so many of them were stuck. Lecture was inappropriate. Discussion was fine for stimulating ideas and creating a

comfortable atmosphere where English-shy students could grapple with expressing their ideas. But it didn't help these students with the more difficult tasks of college-level literacy: identifying and distinguishing between the main idea of a passage and the supporting details, learning how to generalize about as well as to summarize a chapter, and writing complete sentences of varying length and complexity.

In order to help our students move beyond the literal level of understanding, we decided to focus our instruction on Maya Angelou's beautifully written autobiography, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, using modeling as our primary teaching method. [Although this course was team-taught, we found the method effective whether used by one or both instructors.] At a Bay Area Writing Project seminar we learned about modeling, an effective technique that shows students in concrete terms what is expected of them. Instead of handing students a sheet of perfectly-written paragraphs with instructions to "Do the same on your own," students and teacher work together to create a model of the assignment.

In our class, for example, we wanted our students to learn how to summarize what they had read and to make generalizations about it, using appropriate details from the reading as support in their writing. In order to do this, we read and analyzed each chapter of Angelou's book, working together as a group to cluster ideas on the board and eventually compose a paragraph together. The students tried out sentences and rewrote them aloud while one of us recorded them on the board. In this way, we developed a model of the chapter summary, using the students' ideas and words rather than the teachers'. This give-and-take process of modeling at the board was not a one-time event in the class. Every week we used it to review and explain what we wanted in the chapter summaries and in other written assignments. At least one-third of Angelou's text was modeled aloud; every other chapter was assigned to be completed by the students themselves.

This method proved to be especially effective with developmental students. Since the majority of our students were overwhelmed or intimidated by writing, their first draft required such effort that they assumed (or hoped) whatever they had written would fulfill the requirements of the assignment. The concept that writing is a process, a series of recursive steps that involve a great deal of pen on paper, was new to them. Their naivete often was reflected in cliched or vague writing, indicating a lack of thought, which was more troubling to us than any lack of grammatical knowledge. Modeling was a way of helping them dive into the more complex depths below the surface. Because they were guided through the comprehending and composing process in a way that was less threatening and more productive than if they had worked independently, they learned to grapple with

issues in the material they read, to raise questions, and to wonder about relationships. As a result, they learned that writing is a process, a series of manageable tasks, rather than one insurmountable effort that requires perfection at first try.

THE MODELING PROCESS

We began the modeling process by working together on a written summary of each chapter, a simple reiteration of what happened. We found that we needed to teach students how to identify and distinguish between the key events of a chapter and the background. We had them think about the text by first asking, What happened in this chapter? What were the main actions as opposed to the details? Using the technique of clustering, the students listed aloud the highlights from a chapter as one of us wrote them on a board. Events were recorded in whatever order given, and through a series of questions the students began to consider which items were more important than others, which recurred most often, which led to the central ideas.

As our students became more adept at differentiating key events from background, we gradually moved to the more difficult questions about the central idea implicit in the chapter and its underlying meaning. What impression or idea was suggested by the details listed? Were there any important clues or significant details that indicated a relationship among the key ideas in the chapter? What central idea did these details and relationships point to? In this way, we helped students learn how to infer the main idea from the chapter details. Our questions also attempted to guide the students to consider the author's intent. Did the author attempt to convey a particular impression by her choice of words, characters, or actions? This important step encouraged students to use their faculties of observation, reflection, deduction, logic, and feeling. We then helped students discover the point the author was making in the chapter by moving from questions such as *what* is important to *why* it is important. Why did Angelou include this chapter in her book? How did this experience affect the author? Once students could express the point of the chapter, they experimented with several possible topic sentences. Eventually, they produced a clear statement that reflected the intent of the chapter and could be supported by the material on the board.

Finally, one of the instructors and the students composed a paragraph together at the board, summarizing the events of the chapter and explaining their significance. As the writing was in progress, students were able to ask questions, explore ideas, and try out for themselves the expected paragraph form. During this process, the students had to agree on word choice and punctuation. Each sentence was read aloud as it was completed. This encouraged students to do the same with their own writing—to hear it aloud, listening for meaning and grammatical sense. This simple step did as much for clearing up fragments as any red marks in the margin would have. Reading aloud also enabled students to see how sentences work together to develop and express a thought. By the end of the class period, students had copied down the modeled paragraph and thus had a guide in hand to follow them when doing the next assigned chapter or two on their own.

INSTRUCTIONAL BENEFITS

The work these students did on their own as a result of modeling was much closer to the standards they would encounter in more difficult college classes. Their writing showed a more sophisticated understanding of the material read and was organized in a more coherent and thoughtful way. Furthermore, their interpretations of the material read became increasingly more complex and closer to the author's intent because they had learned how to support their explanations with more appropriate details from the text.

Thus, modeling served to develop cognitive, comprehension, and composition skills in an integrated way. Working as a group in this manner helped these students move beyond the literal level of what happened to the interpretive, to the *meaning* of the events or people described. It led our developmental students toward more conceptual, abstract thinking—a skill necessary for their success in college.

Modeling reduced students' anxiety about writing and enabled us to be more effective in aiding inexperienced writers at critical stages of the writing process. The most significant step for our students was to generate sufficient material that allowed them to think about connections, relationships, and meanings inherent in the material they read. Utilizing the modeling process, we were able to help students generate ideas instead of commenting on the lack of them afterward with red-penciled remarks that advise too late. The freedom to think on the page (or board, as we did with modeling) was essential before crafting a coherent, fully-realized paragraph.

Another benefit of modeling was that it built trust between students and teacher, between students and their fellows. It let the students know how valued their ideas were; asking them to supply the content was evidence of the need for and desirability of their words. It provided a secure structure for exploring questions and ideas. As students began to trust us more, they grew surer of their own voices.

SUMMARY

Modeling works, when used to integrate reading and writing, it provides

a non-threatening process that involves students in two tasks crucial to learning:

(Continued on Page 4)

OVERALL TEACHING PLANS: METHODS, TEXTBOOKS, AND MATERIALS

Helping Students Achieve Writing Competence

by CINDY HICKS
Monterey Peninsula College

My approach to teaching writing is based on my reading of Mina Shaughnessy's *Errors and Expectations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), my work with Bill Robinson at San Francisco State University, and my work with university and community college students over the years. I regard student writers not as bad writers, but as inexperienced writers (and sometimes inexperienced readers and inexperienced formal or systematic thinkers.) So, I give them experience.

I ask my writing students to write an essay (or rewrite an essay) every week.

Usually, I require that essays be written in class, reviewed by me, rewritten at home, reviewed by the students' classmates in structured editing sessions, rewritten again at home, and evaluated by me. I also have students write during some of each class period and encourage them to bring their writing for other classes or their jobs to me to review during our conferences. In addition, I ask students to keep a daily journal. In the past, I have instructed students to keep their journals in whatever way was comfortable for them, whether it be writing a continuing story, writing about the events of the days, or free-writing. However, I have found that basic writers seem to have difficulty with such a "loose" assignment, so I am making up a workbook of letters for them to write instead. The letters will range from social to consumer to business letters, and I will provide explanations and examples with each assignment.

I stress persuasive and expository writing in composition classes, but my specific essay assignments vary, depending on the level of the students with whom I am working. I present basic writers with "cases," which are statements of a problem, such as how John Jones should organize his time in order to be ready for three midterms next week; I then ask them to summarize the problem, evaluate the options, and come to a conclusion. (Bill Robinson of San Francisco State University gave me this idea and some cases.) I ask more advanced writers to respond to more sophisticated prose—an essay or a short story, for example—that I have assigned, or I confront them with a topic that they might encounter on a test, such as the CBEST or San Francisco State's JEPET.

Because they are such inexperienced writers, many students have no idea what to write about: writing a page a day in a journal or a five-hundred-word essay seem impossible tasks. So, early in the term, I show students some methods by which they can discover their thoughts on the various writing assignments. I use some of the tried and true methods, including having students read others' opinions, discuss topics in class, and brainstorm, along with the clustering techniques that Gabriele Rico discusses in *Writing the Natural Way* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1983).

While providing my students with writing experience, I inform them of the various options the language gives us for effectively communicating in writing. Throughout the term, we look closely at sentences, paragraphs, and essays that succeed, discussing and practicing the techniques the writers have used to achieve success.

The students and I discuss and practice identifying core sentences—subjects, verbs, and "completers" upon which the sentence is based—and I show the students how to use the core to focus their sentences. I show them and have them practice using various sentence joining and embedding options, including coordinators, adverb clauses, adjective clauses, appositives, verbal phrases. All the while, I stress that writing strong core sentences and effectively applying sentence joining and embedding options will allow them to relate their thoughts in the way that best suits their purposes. In addition to materials that colleagues

and I have developed, I have found parts of several textbooks particularly valuable for teaching about the sentence: the second and third chapters of Ralph Loewe's *The Writing Clinic* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1983) seem to help students understand core sentences; Helen Heightsman Gordon's *From Copying to Creating* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1985), particularly Lessons 10 through 14, is effective in helping basic writers see and practice sentence combining techniques; *The Active Writer*, by Michael Frisbie et al. (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, Inc., 1982), works best with more advanced

writers; William Strong's *Sentence Combining* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1973) provides good practice in manipulating sentences.

When teaching the paragraph and essay, I rely on Francis Christensen's generative rhetoric and show students how each sentence in paragraphs and essays can generate the next and how thoughts can move from general to specific and back again. I teach students about audience and purpose, controlling ideas, topic sentences and thesis statements, and strategies for developing and organizing paragraphs and essays. I also show them techniques for achieving well-focused, unified, and coherent paragraphs. Again, in addition to my own and colleagues' materials, I have found that *From Copying to Creating* and *The Active Writer* are good texts for supporting such instruction. Also, *Writing: A Sourcebook of Exercises and Assignments* by Deborah Gunther et al. (Menlo Park: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc., 1978) provides some excellent lessons on paragraphs and essays.

Throughout the term, I ask students to read various types of writing, ranging from fiction and essays to newspaper articles and excerpts from textbooks, looking always at *how* experienced writers express their thoughts as well as *what* they express.

Whether or not all of this writing experience and instruction leads to students' improving depends on my analysis of the students' writing and the comments that I make. As Shaughnessy states, understanding not only the errors that students make but also the sources of their errors is a vital part of my job as a writing instructor. Equally important is my writing and talking to the students about their writing. As a result, I spend much time reviewing, analyzing, and commenting on students' essays, as well as meeting with students, for, ultimately, the students themselves are best at showing me how I can help them improve.

Two other instructional tools that I am excited about employing in my writing classes are the computer and word processing. I have begun integrating computer-assisted instruction into Learning Center programs and plan to offer students in my Writing Skills course the opportunity to write using the word processor.

This, then, is an overview of the teaching methods and textbooks and other instructional materials that I use and plan to use to help students achieve the writing competence they will need for the present and near future. There is so much more! Every semester, a student, a colleague, some new research, or a frustration will lead me to reconsider, to try something new. I believe that all the students I teach can become competent writers, readers, and thinkers. I just need to figure out how to reach them. I thoroughly enjoy the responsibility, challenge, and constant discovery.

MERITS OF MODELING

(Continued from Page 3)

comprehending what they read and writing about what is significant in the material. Working with students in this way guides them to better, more thoughtful writing and starts them on the right track toward higher grades and increased self confidence.

RELATED READING

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Irene Menegas teaches in the English Division and is Director of the Learning Center at Diablo Valley College.

Dyan Pike has moved from her desk at the College of Marin to sit on the board of her daughter's elementary school and to spend more time writing at her own desk.

They developed the program when both taught in the Communications Department at the College of Marin.

A NEW COLUMN
Inside the Writing Center

As I am dunking my decaf tea bag in my mug and trying to rid myself of my headache, I am thinking of all of you out there inside your writing centers looking out of your windows (or if you have no windows, staring at the walls) and wondering what we are all thinking. What *are* you thinking? What projects *are* you planning? Only those *inside the writing center* can answer these questions. Hello? Hello?

Two thoughtful directors this month decided to pull back the curtains a bit. Ms. Markline and Dr. White-Wright both write enthusiastically about their centers—giving all of us some welcomed support and comfort. Things *are* going well out there.

If you would like to submit articles about your center, please write to Barbara Budrovich, *Inside the Writing Center*, Humanities Division, El Camino College, 16007 Crenshaw Blvd., Torrance, CA 90506.

—BARBARA BUDROVICH
El Camino College

PEER TUTORS IN THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

By JUDY MARKLINE
Allan Hancock College

Judy Markline, Chair, Language Arts Department, Allan Hancock College, writes a refreshing and substantial argument about the feasibility of using peer tutors at the two-year college. This piece was originally written in response to an article in the* Writing Lab Newspaper *(June 1985) by Betty Neumann of Jefferson State College who questioned the use of peer tutors given the open-door policy of the community college and the resulting typical student population.

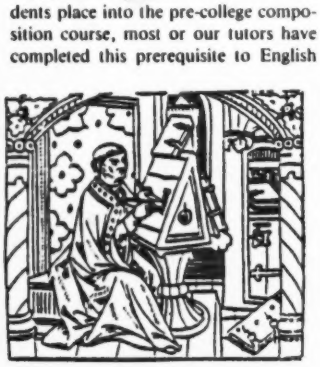
I answer Neumann's query with a resounding YES! Community colleges should employ peer tutors. We at Allan Hancock College have used peer tutors successfully since our writing center opened its doors in 1976.

Identification

Our means of identification, then and now, is very simple: recommendation from an instructor. We follow the procedure established by our tutorial center.

Experience

Because 60 percent of our new students place into the pre-college composition course, most or our tutors have completed this prerequisite to English



101, the typical freshman composition course. After completing the pre-college course, our tutors enroll in 101 and tutor in the center. Thus, our tutors have successfully completed the courses for which they are tutors. In fact, these tutors are usually our most effective tutors; they know well the course their tutees are struggling through. However, we do employ tutors who score directly into freshman composition, who have AA or BA degrees, or who have professional writing experience. Within the community college lies a wealth of student potential, espe:ially the re-entry student who has returned to school after rearing a family or who is making a career change or who has retired from a successful career.

Compensation

Our tutors are paid out of the tutorial center budget, since all students seeking help with their writing assignments must come to the writing center for assistance. In other words, a student who needs help in psychology reports to the tutorial center for a tutor assignment; a student who needs help with writing comes to the writing center. Three "professionals" (two center staff members and one full-time instructor) and one tutor work in the center each hour, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, and two nights weekly, 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Each tutor is limited to twenty hours per week.

Our tutors prefer to receive money rather than credits, especially credits that will not transfer. They attend college on limited funds, so they are interested in money to pay rent, cover tuition, or buy books. Most hold other jobs and attend class twelve to fifteen hours per week.

Training

We do very little training. Most tutors know how the center operates; they were tutees just the semester before. Most tutors know what is required for successful completion of specific courses within the composition program; they have taken the classes. For example, one tutor, Judy, was my student for two semesters, taking a pre-101 course and then 101. As a 101 student, she became our center clerk, recording attendance, filing folders, etc. Then, as a 102 student, she became my classroom tutor and a writing center tutor. She trained on the job, just as I did my first year teaching composition.

Working from a list of students recommended to her by instructors, our

center director hires the tutors and works out their schedules. She also assigns our classroom tutors if we have not located our own. Some tutors, like Judy, work in the classroom and in the center. The director reviews procedure with them and administers a tutor test developed by several English instructors. This test includes a short section on subject-verb identification and punctuation and a longer section on prewriting strategies and revision problems. Our center director handles all tutor problems. Instructors with complaints take them to her, not to the tutor. Tutors, too, seek out the center director with their questions though many feel comfortable asking help from instructors.

Several years ago we tried tutor meetings weekly, then bi-weekly, and finally monthly. Though the tutors and the center staff found sharing problems and complaints and learning new techniques helpful, we encountered difficulty finding a time when most tutors could attend.

Tutoring

Our tutors assist in all areas. They work with students on prewriting, writing, and revising. They locate specific skill exercises and assign them to students. They answer questions about WANDAH, a computer-assisted writing program. Because we have instructors in the center with them, our tutors do not hesitate to seek help if they are unsure or don't know. We have certain "checkpoints"—steps in the writing process of each assignment—that only the classroom instructor may check. Though the tutors assist students with these points, they do not sign off on them. Instead, they remind students to see their instructor at this point. This system assures that students in the center do not avoid their instructors until the final draft. More important, these checkpoints serve as a check on tutors. Misinformation can be caught, and the tutor helped.

"Two-Year" Misnomer

"Two-Year" really is a misnomer for our institution and for many similar colleges throughout the nation. Students who work thirty or more hours per week, students with families, students with skill deficiencies are with us for several years, not two. The terms *freshman* and *sophomore* tend to blur. Our best tutor begins her third year with us this fall (and with an additional role, a new bride!). Another tutor, a student in the Learning Assistance Program, begins her fourth year at the college—two years bringing her skills up, another with personal commitments, and now on track and almost ready to transfer. She will be a new tutor for us this fall. Still another tutor, a woman with a family and little interest in transferring, has been with us for several years. She enrolls in enough units each semester to qualify as a tutor. And, yes, we have excellent tutors move on after a year or two, but we have always found excellent replacements.

Credibility

Qualified tutors are readily accepted by the students. They enjoy working with these tutors who just last semester or year were sitting in their seats asking for help with their writing problems. Tutors are great listeners and sympathizers. They understand; they have been through it.

Skeptical Instructors

My instructors are not skeptical about peer tutors. I do have instructors who do not request tutors for their classes; they just like to "go it on their own." However, these same instructors gladly welcome tutors into the writing center. They know, as we all know at Hancock, that our writing center could not serve our student population unless we employed peer tutors.

THE WRITING LAB

By BARBARA H. WHITE-WRIGHT
Orange Coast College

Barbara H. White-Wright, Writing Lab Director at Orange Coast College, describes a new lab at her college designed to help students in English classes who have specific linguistic problems that cannot be dealt with in the classroom.

The controversy continues in schools and legislatures on how best to serve the student who is not reading on the college level and cannot even write a paragraph of standard English. Unfortunately, more and more high school graduates every year fall into this category; many of these are minority students who speak English as a second language or a second dialect.

English teachers have been trying to handle students' problems on an individual basis. Sometimes whole classes, called remedial classes, are set up to accommodate these students. However, in

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REviews

"REviews" features discussions of books and media programs that are suitable for use in writing or literature courses or that have special interest for teachers of English. These reviews should be from 100 to 500 words and should evaluate the book's or program's effective use in a classroom, in a learning resource center, by an individual student, or by the instructor. Include with the review all pertinent publication information, the number of pages or length of running time, and the cost.

THE SHORTEST DISTANCE IS THE BEST

by JUDITH HERT
San Bernardino Valley College

It's relatively easy to talk about the value of requiring student writing in all academic classes; it is another matter to give concrete, useful advice about how this can be done. My own sense of the politics of the cross-discipline writing movement is that the idea is generally accepted, but that using writing effectively as an academic tool with weak student writers remains a discouraging, even baffling business for most teachers.

~~A little over eighty years ago...~~
~~eighty-seven years ago...~~
~~About seven eighths of a century ago...~~
Eight decades and seven years ago...

This is why a book like *The Shortest Distance to Learning: A Guidebook to Writing Across the Curriculum* is so useful. Edited by JoAn McGuire Simmons, it is a product of the Los Angeles Community College District and UCLA joint project in basic skills. As one would hope, this book is clear, specific, and practical. The large workbook size and format convey its basic approach and the message that anyone can do this. Though some might suggest pejoratively that it lacks theoretical base and content, it is obviously intended to be simple, useful, and accessible.

Each of the book's seven chapters covers a specific question or issue basic in any cross discipline writing project. The first chapter, titled "Why Write?" addresses a teacher's questions and, perhaps, misgivings: "How much writing?" "I'm not qualified!" "Why can't English teachers take care of student writing?" "Won't writing take precious time from my course content?" and "Is this going to be more work because I've got fifty students per class?" All these complaints and more are addressed briefly, rationally, and convincingly. Though some instructors, probably too few, might want to know some of the linguistic or rhetorical ideas that could add weight or even interest, this is an essentially hands-on approach, geared for the widest possible audience.

The remaining six chapters are equally practical. These involve the use of learning logs, the design of writing assignments, the creation of essay questions, techniques for evaluation, ways to help students during the writing process, and, finally, ways to improve student comprehension of textbooks. Each of these chapters makes a few key points. For instance, in the chapter on writing effective essay questions, the reader is told to narrow and focus the question, use examples, divide the question into parts, and use check lists. Each of these points is supported by examples. At the same time, the format reinforces the clear organization by using bold headings for each key point and by putting all information possible in visual forms—such as maps, scales, lists, tables. This book is meant for fast, easy reading.

One of the chapters many readers will find especially useful is Chapter Two: Learning Logs. The appeal of learning logs is that they help students focus their attention, provide a model for note taking or summarizing, and create a way for students to incorporate their own ideas and feelings. Learning logs can also serve as prewriting for later papers or essay exams. The students are better prepared to write when they have made notes, written a summary, identified key words, or spontaneously thought on paper, all of which can happen in a learning log. But not all learning logs are the same, and this chapter includes different kinds of logs for different purposes in different disciplines. One log from a political science class shows a student trying to match his own political ideas with a class lecture on the different philosophical positions of Democrats and Republicans. Because learning logs provide students with a way to summarize and rework material *and* because they require no correcting, many instructors will find them an ideal way to introduce writing into their classes.

Another chapter that should have immediate appeal for teachers of all disciplines is Chapter Seven: Improving Student Comprehension of the Textbook. In this chapter the author suggests various ways to help students master a text. These include: anticipation-reaction guides, selective reading guides, study guides, and graphic organizers. Since college teachers often protest that students can't write because they can't or don't read and since most teachers use a text, showing the teachers how to help the students read the course texts seems valuable. It is, in fact, an ideal first step in improving student writing across the disciplines.

There is, perhaps, something ironic about a basic book for college teachers about why and how to put student-generated language—the tool for most understanding and thinking—at the center of learning. The fact that this book is necessary, practical, and very useful says something important about teaching and learning in our culture, but that is another subject.

NOTE: As a footnote for those readers who wonder how to best make use of this text, I suggest the following. If you already have any kind of cross-disciplines program going, get your dean or librarian to order copies of this book and then send them around to those teachers already looking for ideas. If there is no program at all, get the librarian to order a couple of copies and send one to the dean and the other to the senate president or some other influential, academic type. Whatever you do with it, English teachers should lie low and work through their non-English friends.

[] Simmons, JoAn McGuire, editor. *The Shortest Distance to Learning: A Guidebook to Writing Across the Curriculum*. Los Angeles: LACCD and UCLA Office of Academic Interinstitutional Programs, 1984. 137 pages, $7.50. [To order write: OAIP-UCLA Gayley Center, 405 Hilgard Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90024.]

Judy Hert, Dean of Humanities at San Bernardino Valley College, has written extensively on writing across the curriculum, and has helped many colleges establish writing-across-the-curriculum programs.

PRACTICAL, USEFUL, AND TEACHABLE

by JACK GILL
College of San Mateo

Combining a handbook, rhetoric, and reader, Sylvan Barnet and Marcia Stubbs' *Practical Guide to Writing with Additional Readings*, now in its fifth edition, is a complete, useful, and teachable text. As its title suggests, the book stresses the practical, yet it does so

with imagination and wit, giving it an appealing maturity and an intellectual level appropriate for community college transfer students. With full chapters, each including exemplary readings and stimulating editorial apparatus, the text emphasizes analysis, exposition, and persuasion, while considering description and narration. The sections on revising, on style and fluency, on the research paper, and on special writing assignments (explications, book reviews, essay examinations) are valuable and add a most practical dimension to the text.

The punctuation, grammar, and editing sections treat the material succinctly, yet with completeness and clarity.

The exercises throughout the text are cogent and serviceable. Surprisingly, like the text itself, they are often charming and fun.

The text includes about fifty short essays, mostly contemporary, on various topics. These include some sample essays; one, on the research paper, is especially beneficial. These readings are integrated with the rhetoric in a fashion that not only provides the students with materials for discussion and subject matter for writing but also illustrates ways of writing. Many similar texts claim to accomplish a rhetoric-readings integration; here, with well-chosen essays and pointed exercises, such a claim is justified.

The book's lively, lucid style is mature without being pompous, helpful without being condescending. And especially attractive is the text's emphasis, indeed its insistence, on finding one's own voice. In addition, the Instructor's Manual, which accompanies the text, contains many wise suggestions for assignments and teaching.

Practical Guide proves to be a superior text. I've used the fourth edition with pleasure and success, and I heartily recommend the fifth.

[] Barnet, Sylvan and Marcia Stubbs. *Practical Guide to Writing with Additional Readings*, 5th edition. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1986. $14.95.

IS MORE BETTER?

by ETHELYN SIMMONS
Santa Monica College

From the first edition (1974) to the fifth (1986), *Readings for Writers* by Jo Ray McCuen and Anthony C. Winkler has swollen from a workable 530 pages to an unwieldy 741. At some point in the intervening years an appendix consisting of annotated student themes was affixed to an already intricate rhetorical format. To the current edition the editors add twenty-three reading selec-

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A FIVE-STEP PLAN

(Continued from Page 1)

reading comprehension and writing performance and completed more units than those who did not receive tutoring (MacDonald, 1984). A study at Miami-Dade Community College showed that students alerted to academic difficulty who took advantage of assistance programs boosted their grade point averages by .88 while students who did not take advantage of these programs suffered a further decline of an average .44. A number of other studies could be cited, but the evidence is clear: remediation works!

RETENTION

The current retention rate for community colleges nationwide is 50 percent; this attrition is clearly counterproductive and expensive. In contrast, some exemplary developmental programs are now retaining 80 to 90 percent of their students (Roueche and Armes, 1980).

Higher retention is financially beneficial to institutions. Bray (1984) states that a 3 percent retention increase meant a savings of $180,000 for Sacramento City College. In addition, Friedlander (1981-82) reports,

> Contrary to popular perceptions, the investigators found that the developmental program at Westmoreland [Community College, Pennsylvania] was actually income generating—earning $145,771 more than it cost to operate over a four-year period. The researchers estimated that the higher retention and course enrollment (beyond the developmental course work) of the underprepared students who had completed the program added $208,787 in revenues over the four-year period. They also estimated that as much as $336,335 may have been lost due to the lack of improved retention from those underprepared students who bypassed the prescribed developmental work during the same period (p. 61).

REFORMS

Experts suggest the following common sense reforms for community colleges:

1. *Assess student abilities before or upon enrollment. Make enrollment in remedial reading, writing, and mathematics mandatory for students deficient in these areas.* Although reading has been found necessary for success in almost all college courses, reading remediation is more often recommended than required (McCabe, 1981; Roueche and Armes, 1980; Schinoff, 1982).

Research shows that students often do not choose the remediation they need. A study of 4,764 students in 93 colleges showed that students who considered their skills below average were much less likely than others to take advantage of such services as job placement, career planning, personal counseling, special tutoring, and special credit or noncredit courses to improve skills (Friedlander, 1981-82). Another investigation of 6,426 students indicated that *fewer* than 30 percent of students who lacked confidence in a skill area took advantage of a support program designed to remediate that skill (Friedlander, 1981-82). Clearly, community colleges must direct students toward the help they need.

2. *Infuse liberal arts education into all curricula, including remedial and vocational programs* (Bray, 1984; Breneman and Nelson, 1981; Cohen and Brawer, 1982; Johnson, 1982; Zoglin, 1982). Students, even in remedial courses, must be given frequent opportunities to read, write, think about, and discuss items of historical, artistic, and global significance.

3. *Provide an interdisciplinary, content-based approach to developmental reading* (Bray, 1984, Cheek, 1983, Friedlander, 1981-82; Roueche and Snow, 1978). Hunter (1984) believes that reading problems do not stem primarily from an inability to decode but rather from a student's inability to bring prior knowledge to bear on the text and an inability to understand the organization of text. Effective programs integrate reading, writing, spelling, and thinking into a content area. Courses fail when reading is not tied to an academic area because skills do not automatically transfer.

Numerous studies verify that integrating the teaching of reading skills with content courses brings about dramatically improved scores in both the content area and on standardized reading tests. These studies have been conducted with content areas as diverse as natural science and mythology (Denman, 1983), history (Denman, 1983; Goldsmith, 1979), biology and sociology (Santa and Truscott, 1979), and calculus (Lovelace and McKnight, 1980). Stammer (1983) also calls for an integration of reading with vocational/technical education.

4. *Raise academic expectations. At the same time, provide more counseling and assistance programs* (Friedlander, 1981-82; Roueche and Armes, 1980). Miami-Dade Community College has initiated reforms that include more direction in program design. Students are tested upon entering, and those deficient in basic skills must take remedial courses before proceeding. All students must complete the college's general education core before they can move on to elective or major-field courses. Students who begin with deficiencies are expected to take longer to complete their programs and, in some cases, to reduce their course loads. The college provides extensive counseling and advisement services to students, and a computerized academic alert system monitors student progress. Students placed on academic warning are required to sign up for courses in study skills, career goals, and time management; they may also be required to reduce their course loads. Students not meeting academic standards are first put on academic probation. If they do not improve, they are suspended for one term. Continued failure results in dismissal; however, student performance has improved through the academic alert system. In fall, 1980, of 4,171 students alerted, 82 percent were able to improve enough to be removed from academic warning. The college sets high standards for the awarding of credits, certificates, and degrees.

Excellence is rewarded by tickets to cultural events, participation in honors seminars, and scholarships (Dubocq, 1981: Lukenbill and McCabe, 1982; McCabe, 1981; Schinoff, 1982).

5. *Establish program evaluation and accountability* (Alfred, 1984; Bray, 1984, Heerman, 1983; Wilson, 1982). The California Postsecondary Education Commission has mandated that institutions develop and implement stringent evaluation models for all remedial courses by 1985. English departments, however, have not been given funding or computer access to accomplish this, and few colleges have actually implemented program evaluation. Although remedial programs increase skill levels and produce lasting results, few colleges can produce empirical evidence of the lasting results of their own remedial efforts. However crude or homegrown, remedial programs must produce evaluation systems. If nothing more sophisticated is possible, a short follow-up letter asking about students' educational and vocational status could be sent to students in the years following remediation. Student clerks could chart pre- and post-test scores during remediation and record educational/vocational status following remediation. We desperately need these numbers to convince administrators, governing boards, and legislators of the efficacy and importance of our program.

In my research, I discovered that far fewer sections of reading are being taught in Bay Area community colleges in 1985 than were taught in 1980, even though literacy continues to decline. We are all aware of the threat of greater cutbacks in remediation at the

community college level. Our jobs are threatened; more important, serious students needing help with basic skills may be deprived of that opportunity. We must go on the offensive. We must thoroughly assess student abilities upon enrollment, and then firmly guide them toward realistic programs in which they can be successful. We must initiate curriculum reforms that develop students' intellects as well as their basic skills. We must raise our academic expectations before outsiders force their standards on us. Most important for maintenance and needed expansion of our programs, we must have numbers and statistics to advertise that students do indeed lead more productive lives because of our programs.

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News From Our Regions

REGION II: SAN FRANCISCO BAY

Directors: Bruce Bennett, Ohlone College; John Callen, City College of San Francisco.

JIM CAGNACCI, president of the English Council of California Two-Year Colleges and an instructor at City College of San Francisco, served this semester as a member of the accreditation team that visited Santa Monica College.

REGION III: SAN FRANCISCO SOUTHERN BAY AND MONTEREY

Directors: John Lovas, De Anza College; Nick Roberts, Cabrillo College.

On 6 March 1986 more than thirty community college English faculty participated in the Second Annual Mini-Conference on Articulation with San Jose State. Organized by LAVERNE GONZALEZ, Chair of San Jose State's Liaison Committe with Community Colleges, the conference attendees heard Professor Gabriele Rico describe a new exam for entrance into SJ State's upper division writing requirement course. A panel discussion on writing labs and remedial programs included LINDA LANE, Foothill College; LOIS LUND, Evergreen Valley College; MARY JANE PAGE, San Jose City College; ROSEMARY YBARRA, Hartnell College; and PAT NICHOLS, San Jose State. The final presentation, on computers in the teaching of English, was made by GWEN CONSTANT, West Valley College. The afternoon concluded with a social hour for the participants.

JOHN LOVAS, De Anza College (and a Region III director), was recently named to the Board of Contributors to the *Palo Alto Weekly*, a role which allows him to write a column every few months.

NICK ROBERTS (Lovas' co-director) will teach next year at the College of Ripon, just north of York, England. As part of a Fulbright exchange, Roberts looks forward to a remarkably amiable teaching load: two courses of fifteen students each per term, and he wonders if the man from Ripon (the other part of the exchange) realizes what a community college teacher's comp load is!

REGION VI: CENTRAL COASTAL

Directors: Tony Gilleran, Santa Barbara City College; Judy Markline, Allan Hancock College.

Not everyone gets a mention in Jack Smith's column, read daily by thousands of readers of the *Los Angeles Times*. On 3 March 1986, however, JUDITH RAMOS (Moorpark College) had that honor.

"Judith Ramos, instructor of English at Moorpark College, has a sharp eye for the comical malapropism and the misunderstood cliche, which she keeps in a notebook she calls 'The Jocular Vein,' a phrase one of her students used when he obviously meant 'the jugular vein.'

"She thinks many of these errors come from contemporary students' distaste for reading, and their tendency to misspell the words they hear.

"She sends me the following samples from recent papers: *A profit of doom . . . my pears and myself . . . fowl language . . . designer genes . . .*

"Ms. Ramos has also discovered in her students' papers an actor who was a *drug attic*, a person who believes in the ideals of *Lennon and Marx*, and the idea that nuclear weapons are needed to protect us from *hostel enemies*.

"'My favorite,' she says, 'is "I guess there is nothing left to do but *prey*"—a cynical utterance meant to be reverent.' Ms. Ramos is also enchanted by the possibilities of the new word *prostidudes* in 'This movie promotes sexual intercoarse with prostidudes.'

"This sentence, she notes, 'unwittingly combines moral judgment of profligate behavior (intercoarse) with a delightful new name for male prostitutes.'

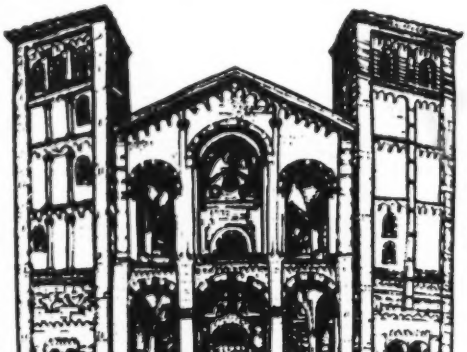
"Ms. Ramos says she tries to get her students to avoid cliches, but they use them anyway, often with ambiguous if not disastrous results. Thus, 'He resigned under a clout' . . . 'the root of least resistance' . . . 'the route of all evil' . . . and 'tow the line' . . .

"Ms. Ramos says: 'Although I always like to read batches of essays to enter into the very sincere and often profound world of my students (some of them—let me be honest), I no longer go armed with a glass of chilled Chablis to deaden the pain of grammatical/structural chaos. The wild but dedicated writers of ideas struggling to be born make up for the uninteresting essays written by uninterested students.'"

REGION VII: NORTH LOS ANGELES

Directors: Jo Ray McCuen, Glendale Community College; Lloyd Thomas, Los Angeles Mission College.

Representatives from the English departments of nine Los Angeles area colleges—College of the Canyons, El Camino, Long Beach, Los Angeles City, LA Pierce, LA Valley, Pasadena, Santa Monica, and West LA—have been meeting monthly at UCLA as part of its Transfer



Alliance Program to discuss course content and teaching strategies for freshman composition. BRUCE ANDERS (West LA College), MARIANNE BORETZ (LA City College), MARY LOU FONSECA (Santa Monica College), and LLOYD THOMAS (LA Mission College and director of community college English programs for UCLA's Office of Academic Interinstitutional Programs) are writing a position paper that will summarize the group's consensus on the nature of the freshman composition course, the danger of overemphasizing rhetorical modes to the neglect of content, the use of literature in the comp course, and the role and scope of the research paper. The position paper will appear in a future issue of *inside english*.

A revised version of a presentation made by BARBARA BILSON (Santa Monica College) at the 1984 MLA Annual Convention appeared in the Spring 1986 *ADE Bulletin*. Titled "Unrealistic Teaching Loads and Threatened Literature Courses: Or, Why We Need an MLA Community College Commission," the article draws upon a questionnaire that English department chairs completed for Bilson in fall 1984.

REGION VIII:SOUTH LOS ANGELES

Directors: Robert Dees, Orange Coast College; Lois Powers, Fullerton College.

1986 saw a new book published by GARY HOFFMAN (Orange Coast College): *Writeful*, a combination source book for and commentary on good writing. Published by Verve Press, *Writeful* will be reviewed in the next issue of *inside english*.

REGION IX: SAN BERNARDINO

Directors: Bob Rippy, San Bernardino Valley College; Andy Sacks, Victor Valley College.

In April, JUDY HERT (San Bernardino Valley College), a member of the Advisory Board of the Western States Project on Women in the Curriculum, participated in the Project's conference on "Integrating Women's Studies into the Liberal Arts Curriculum" as part of a panel discussing "Resistance to Change and Strategies to Overcome It."

ANDY SACKS, Region IX Co-director, is rated as a national chess master and recently won Second Brilliancy Prize at the 1985 American Chess Open for his win over a highly ranked International Master from the Phillippines.

At the next meeting of the English chairs of Region IX colleges, the participants will try to work out a regional agreement among all the campuses to accept the course just below 1A (freshman comp) as meeting the prerequisite for the 1A courses.

JACK MITCHELL (San Bernardino Valley College) has been accepted to a National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Seminar "Health and the Humanities" at Syracuse, New York. One of the major texts of this seminar is Susan Sontag's *Illness as Metaphor*.

REGION X: SAN DIEGO

Directors: Rob Archer, Mira Costa College; Roseanne Hillhouse, Imperial Valley College.

DOROTHY BERGER (San Diego Mesa College) is Chair of Project Success, a new program established by the San Diego Community College District. Aimed at an extensive district-wide program, Project Success will examine closely and offer recommendations in all areas of assessment, placement, remediation, and general instruction. Many members of the San Diego Community College District English departments will participate on the program's committees.

ACROSS THE REGIONS

JOYCE LIPKIS and BARBARA BILSON led a round-table discussion on gender issues in teaching composition at the Western States Project on Women in the Curriculum conference, "Integrating Women's Studies into the Liberal Arts," at the Pacific Shores Hotel in Santa Monica. Also attending the conference and representing English were, among others, LINDA KITZ, Cabrillo College; GEORGIA LOGAN, De Anza College; MERRIL J. GERBER, Pasadena City College.

NINA THEISS, chair of the English Department at Santa Monica College, just completed her second term as one of three community college representatives to the English Liaison Committee, a subcommittee of the statewide Articulation Council. Also representing community college English departments are JIM CAGNACCI (City College of San Francisco) and EVANNE JARDINE (Santa Barbara City College).

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
ECCTYC on the Master Plan: Part 2

In the last issue of *i.e.* this column was devoted to three issues before the Master Plan Commission: joint remedial programs with four-year campuses, regional boards, and credentialing. I would like in this column to continue focusing on concerns presently being discussed and acted upon by the the Commission.

First, there is the strong movement to establish a general education transfer

core curriculum on all community college campuses. The object of this core curriculum would be to insure the transferability of general education courses to four-year institutions. At first glance this would seem of enormous benefit to community college students intending to transfer. However, there are a number of concerns presently being glossed over that need to be examined. This core curriculum is obviously meant to ease transfer to University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) campuses; therefore, any core curriculum would have to meet the more stringent transfer hurdles of UC and still be acceptable to the CSU system. As we all know, the UC campuses have a dearth of lower division electives and accept very few substitutes for what are identified as basic general education courses; most of the variety in lower division offerings at community colleges comes from establishing specialized and topical courses that will be acceptable for general education transfer in the CSU system in lieu of the "more standard" offerings. A statewide core curriculum for community college transfer programs would not include such specialized offerings, which have no parallels in the UC system, thus effectively abolishing such courses on our campuses. This entire core program concept sidesteps the issue of regional needs and concerns in favor of a truly bland sameness for all community colleges, that bland sameness that the CAN Project implicitly encourages.

At the other end of the spectrum, but obviously related to the idea of the core transfer curriculum, sits the entire issue of remediation. Students will be expected to reach the level necessary to succeed in the core curriculum within a "reasonable length of time," having completed a "reasonable number of units of remedial coursework." What happens to those students for whom the prediction is made that they cannot reach such a level in a "reasonable length of time" after completing a "reasonable number of remediation units"? These students with whom community colleges have a proven track record of success will be sent to non-credit adult education centers. Does a network of such centers presently exist independent of community colleges? No. Therefore, we likely face the specter of a whole new state education bureaucracy to establish, maintain, and coordinate a presently fragmented statewide program of adult education.

And where does this emphasis on student level and potential lead us? To a system of statewide placement examinations. If a statewide placement exam is

to be inaugurated, there are a number of concerns that must be faced early on. Who will pay? Even if students are required to pay a fee to take the exam, surely the fee system cannot pay for the entire test adminstration. Where will the additional money be found? Second is the issue of when, where, and how often the exam will be administered. And third, who will devise and test the reliability of such an instrument? Next, who will correct it, and who will establish scores and levels? Will all campuses have to place students according to the same scores? If so, what program variety will be allowed on individual cam-

puses? Finally, and most important, how much influence over the test will instructors and local campuses have?

The time for input and necessary change is now! The time to raise questions, demand answers, and voice concerns is now! Once the Master Plan Commission's report is finalized, it might as well be carved in stone. When accepted, the report will be implemented, and modification to it will be extremely difficult, if not impossible. ECCTYC is not opposed to rational, well-conceived, positive change. But it is opposed to change based on whim, to arbitrary change without careful deliberation and concern for problems or issues that will arise because of the change.

JIM CAGNACCI
City College of San Francisco

The Winds of Change:
The Review of the Master Plan

by GORDON TAYLOR
Yuba College

On 2 April 1986, the Commission for the Review of the Master Plan for Higher Education (its full, official title) presented the final report on its year-long study of the community colleges (CC's) to the Legislature. The Review Commission (RC) has finished the first stage of its charge and will now study the other segments of higher education, the California State University (CSU) and the University of California (UC), to present a report about a year from now on the entire system and how it thinks it should operate. The current report, "The Challenge of Change: A Reassessment of the California Community Colleges," runs to thirty-five pages, contains sixty-eight recommendations separated into five categories: "Access and Success in the California Community Colleges," "Mission and Function," "Faculty and Adminstrators," "Governance," and "Community College Finance," along with a few appendices concerning the Commission's charge and some preliminary estimates of the costs related to its proposals.

In the introduction to the report, the RC states that the CC's need to change "to achieve the goals of universal access, individual success, and education which is both high quality and accountable to the people of California"—a statement general and opaque and stylistically bureaucratic enough to appeal to many as well as to sundry. It also points out that "Since 1960, rapid demographic and societal changes have brought new meaning to the [CC's] commitment to access." Our "society grows older and ethnically more diverse" and "more aware of and sympathetic to changes in the workforce and lifstyle," it reports, and says that by the year 2000, those who are now classified as minorities will make up about one-half of the state's population.

"There must be a commitment on all sides—from the State, from the college, and from the students—to excellence and accountability."

About the present system, "some [people] wonder if it is really cost effective, educationally sound, or good public policy to provide increasingly varied State-funded programs as a means of attracting students and whether the process of attracting students is equivalent to meaningful open access." The RC says, "access must be meaningful: and to be meaningful, it must be access to a quality system that helps ensure the success of every student who enrolls. The responsibility for this success falls on all who participate—particularly those who teach and those who learn." As to the colleges' "mission and function," the RC says that the CC's "are postsecondary in nature, and their primary mission should be to provide accessible academic and vocational education toward associate degrees, transfer, or employment."

In discussing the colleges themselves, the RC says that they "must respond to increasing diversity of their student pool by fostering institutional flexibility and innovation." They should operate more like postsecondary schools "and encourage institutional flexibility, excellence in teaching, and efficient management, . . . [and] should be free of rigid personnel requirements and operating procedures." They should be governed to make them "accountable to taxpayers, and provide statewide leadership, while encouraging and supporting local leadership and initiative." The State Board of Governors (BG) as currently established cannot carry out what it needs to do to make the CC's work as many people and the RC recommend. The colleges also need "a new and more predictable, flexible, and accountable finance system . . . to allow [them] to function as postsecondary institutions." The RC reiterates throughout that "we recommend change."

It is probably not neccessary to enumerate all sixty-eight specific recommendations; I shall try to summarize and combine but still list them as accurately as possible:

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$ACRAMENTO $CENE

REviews

(Continued from Page 6)

tions, "an Issue section in which the writers debate the merits of some controversial or thought-provoking topic," and a glossary of rhetorical terms. The result of all this burgeoning is a sort of pedagogical chimera. It's hard to tell whether this book, introduced as "an anthology of readings," now focuses on reading for writers or writing for readers; it never really achieves an identity. Rhetorically, it's not inclusive enough to qualify as a handbook with readings. On the other hand, readings are too didactically systematized under rhetorical labels to function as a "reader." None-

the less, the duality will doubtless appeal to instructors who prefer not to juggle two texts. Two major flaws mar the bulky new edition: the visual format, which is so choppy it inhibits readability, and the somewhat baffling grouping of readings, which is exacerbated by the many additions.

Working from the top down, *Readings for Writers* is divided into three basic parts: Prewriting (chapters one to four), writing (chapters five to nine), and Special Assignments (chapters ten to thirteen). Most chapters contain a model selection followed by comments from the editors, an advice selection, discussion selections, example selections, and the issue section, winding up with chapter writing assignments. Brief headnotes precede each. The lengthy chapter six (pp. 188-427) is further divided into the traditional rhetorical categories. Continuing downward, each selection except "Advice" is followed by a vocabulary list, questions on content and form, and writing suggestions. All presumably relate to the chapter topic.

Readings are variously boxed, numbered by paragraphs, accompanied by running summaries, paraphrased, italicized, and/or outlined. Now, it takes a while to get the hang of this. I found myself thumbing back to the table of contents every few pages just to adjust my bearings—and finally resorted to an outline on a five-by-eight card. I would worry about students. Most blanch at the mention of an outline. All these devices not only impede reading flow—especially a first reading—but they obscure content. They also create an overprescriptive, didactic atmosphere within which the readers have little freedom to form their own first impression of some rich writings. Once you've turned a book on its side to read an editorial signpost, your cortex tends to freeze, and you willingly submit to the editors' judgment. And skimming is impossible.

Actually, even the confining format is not as frustrating as the inconsistencies within it. Typography, which normally alerts the reader to like classifications, here often serves only to confuse. Boldface captions vary so little in size and general appearance that it's difficult to maintain a sense of design, especially since most are flush with the left margin. The typeface used to mark off sections in readings and that used for end exercises appear the same. Often when reading you have to shift into reverse to identify the writer. Further, italics pop up with such startling frequency (contextual subtitles, instructional guides, theses statements, and so on) that the line between form and emphasis blurs.

Just when you think you have a handle on the labeling system, the editors insert something you're not prepared for or leave out something you were led to expect. And it's back to the five-by-eight. For instance, where are the model selections for chapter one ("What Do You Mean by Rhetoric?"), chapter eleven ("Writing About Literature"), chapter twelve ("Writing for the Sciences"), or chapter thirteen ("Writing Reports")? Surely these meet the criterion that "all chapters dealing with actual writing performance open with a model" as much as, say, "What Should I Sound Like?"

Too often the distinction between illustrative selections is unclear: model, discussion, and examples seem interchangeable. In some cases, selections only routinely related to chapter topics could be effectively employed elsewhere. Admittedly, the grouping problem is compounded by the sheer number of choices. In one model by Stephen Leacock illustrating the chapter on "How Do I Get from Outline to Paragraph?" the editors circle the word "they" which is used twenty times in a short paragraph and italicize "can't play" which, at effective intervals, completes the phrase. I assumed that McCuen and Winkler intended to emphasize the rhetorical impact of repetition;

yet, in their follow-up they say very little about this important device other than its role in assuring coherence. We all know how parallelism can reinforce any mood. This marvelous paragraph is so skillfully contrived, the humor so delightfully peppered with repetition, it seems a shame to dispense with it before examining how Leacock achieves his effect. Perhaps the piece would serve a better purpose in the chapter on rhetoric. After all, an infinite number of paragraphs exemplify unity, coherence and completeness at least as well as—perhaps better than—the Leacock excerpt.

Particularly strange is the choice of George Bernard Shaw's "Bunyan and Shakespeare" to illustrate the section on the play review (chapter eleven). In typical Shavian sardonic prose, Shaw cuts back and forth from a general diatribe on Shakespearean pretentiousness to a specific, contrasting view of the play, *Pilgrim's Progress*, based on Bunyan's work. In between, Shaw invokes Ruskin, Ibsen, and Macaulay, among others. He also explores the personal

backgrounds and traditions motivating Bunyan and Shakespeare. Because of its discursive nature, the selection focuses on concepts rather than dramatic form. It's amusing reading (as Shaw always is) but not instructive enough for a beginning student critic. A more contemporary, less convoluted review seems more to the point.

Although the book offers instructors an impressive range of reading choices, it is weighted on the heavy side. Of the 144 readings, a disproportionate number are somber, obscure, even morbid. On the sunny side are wonderfully readable articles, some of which instruct via humor. For openers there is Paul Roberts' classic "How to Say Nothing in 500 Words." Or "A Brief Lexicon of Jargon" by Richard K. Redfern. And the simple, thoughtful "Why I Write" of Joan Didion. But this is largely a collection of serious works. Editors McCuen and Winkler reflect the predominant mood in their own passive, formal, and impersonal writing. They talk *about* students, not *to* them.

Altogether, *Reading for Writers* is a formidable number. If I were an English One student, it would make me plenty anxious. I think it is most appropriate for an advanced composition class taught by a discriminating instructor.

☐ McCuen, Jo Ray and Anthony C. Winkler. *Readings for Writers, 5th edition*. NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1986. 741 pages, $13.95.

Ethelyn Simmons teaches and/or tutors in composition at Santa Monica College. Her previous activities include a twelve-year stint as writer for the UCLA Office of Public Information and the UCLA Extension Department of Public Relations. Earlier, she spent several years as reporter and editor for southland newspapers. She recently earned a Masters in English from UCLA.

The (noun) of the (adjective) (noun)
or
The Rime (sic) of the Ancient Warriner
by R W B
It is an ancient Warriner's
And it stoppeth every wight
From doing what is best to do
When learning how to write
It mixes skills and drills and frills
With exhortation solemn.
And stacks itselves on classroom shelves
Column after column
Boynton
(It transmogrifies itself with ease
Into Little, Brown and Guth
And Hodges, Crews and Ebbitts—
The field is full forsooth)
It names the parts and modes and marks-
It's a taxonomic rite—
And multitudes are led through it
Yet still they cannot write,
And go as ones that have been stunned
And are of sense forlorn.
Much sadder and unwiser wights
Than ever they was born
A Boynton/Cook concoction
50
With thanks to Sandra Boynton, Recycled Papers Products, Inc. and Silas Tomkyn Comberbacke, poet

SACRAMENTO SCENE

(Continued from Page 9)

—**Access and Success**: The Governor and the Legislature should reaffirm open access to provide equal opportunity to all high school graduates and others at least eighteen years of age capable of profiting from the instruction. The BG should clearly define academic standards and consult with the Academic Senate (presumably of the California CC's) to establish minimum academic levels for different courses and programs, strengthen probationary and dismissal standards, and, in sum, set up a thorough-going matriculation program.

—**Mission and Function**: The CC's should provide "rigorous, high quality lower division instruction for students who wish to obtain associate degrees, transfer to a four-year institution, or prepare for an occupation." Remedial education is an important function of the CC's; it is essential for inadequately prepared students; but courses should be non-credit, not applicable to a degree, not transferable, and a student should be limited to taking no more than thirty semester or forty-five quarter units. The RC would authorize "State-funded, non-credit, adult education, of less than collegiate level, for those who cannot or do not wish to enroll in regular programs"; and students who need more remedial work could be referred to these. The RC also suggests fee-based community programs so long as they are fully fee-supported, including indirect costs, and do not detract from the colleges' primary functions.

—**Transfer Education**: The BG, the UC's Regents, the CSU's Trustees, and appropriate faculty groups

should get together to set up a "general education transfer core curriculum" that will ensure that a CC student can transfer to UC or CSU; to inform students in secondary schools of the core curriculum and of the requirements for collegiate work so that they can get remedial work before leaving high school; to inform all junior high schools, high schools, and CC's in California, and, particularly, schools with lots of minority students of the requirements. Those high school students not eligible for UC or CSU should complete the core curriculum at a CC; and the BG should participate with the four-year institutions to develop the core curriculum and to improve transfers (both in quality and in numbers, one presumes). The BG should redesign the A numbers, one presumes). The BG should redesign the Associate in Arts and Associate in Science degrees to include the transfer core curriculum, courses for specific college majors, and elective requirements; and no courses beyond these should be required. The Board should also establish an Associate in Applied Arts degree to prepare students to be employed immediately in fields where there is no baccalaureate degree and to indicate their basic competence in general education as well as in entry-level occupational skills.

—**Faculty and Administrators**: Credentialing requirements should be dropped. The Legislature should authorize the BG, as it consults the faculty, to "(a) establish qualifications for employment of faculty and administrators, and (b) require that new faculty appointments, both full-time and part-time, be subject to traditional peer review in addition to other administrative procedures." The BG should make a plan to strengthen affirmative action policies and programs. The Legislature should repeal the statutory limitations on the numbers of part-time teachers and authorize the BG to establish a statewide policy. Part-time teachers should advise students and help develop curriculum.

—**Tenure**: The BG should be able to establish the probationary period for new teachers, preferably at least four years; new teachers should be reviewed by peers before being granted tenure; all teachers should be reviewed by peers, students, and administrators. The RC recommends also that the Legislature authorize the BG to develop "a pilot program of two-to-five-year 'rolling' contracts, coupled with periodic peer and student review, as an alternative to tenure."

—**Salary**: Salary schedules should be based on academic rank; part-time teachers should be paid "appropriately for duties in addition to classroom teaching."

—**Academic Senates**: The Educational Employees Relations Act should be amended "to delineate and protect the role of the academic senates with respect to policies affecting the academic and professional matters." The BG should strengthen the faculty senates in determining and administering academic standards; approving courses; hiring, keeping, and evaluating teachers; and other academic functions.

—**Governance**: The RC recommends that the BG be given, in essence, the authority to define and run the CC's much as the Regents run UC and the Trustees run CSU; that the BG's members' terms of office be increased from four to eight years; that the Chancellor's Office be separated from the State's civil service system. The organization and management of local districts and district boards should remain unchanged, at least for the present, and students should be encouraged to participate more in the running of the local CC.

—**Finance**: The report recommends a number of changes in the way the CC's are financed: that the State's support vary according to changes in property tax revenues, that the BG and the Department of Finance write a set of non-statutory instructions to replace the current budget formula, that a simplified form of differential funding be set up, that the CC's support be based on full-time equivalent enrollment rather than average daily attendance, and that a number of things related to finance be transfered from myriad agencies to the CC's Board of Governors.

—**Costs**: The preliminary estimates of the costs involved are as follows: matriculation, $50 million ($35 million for staff and related expenses, $15 million for data processing); special studies and institutional research projects by the BG and the California Postsecondary Education Commission, $200,000; for the BG to establish academic requirements, develop programs, write annual reports, etc., $1 million; part-time teachers, $9.6 million; professional development, $9 million; a training program for districts' board members, $150,000; total, approximately $70 million.

The State Assembly's Education Committee will start hearings on the report on 10 April 1986 at the Capitol.

Some bills will soon be drafted as a result of the report and the hearings, but it is too soon to tell what form they will take. Certainly, there will be some to encourage the open access, some to hearten minority people, and, no doubt, some to make changes in the operations of the Board of Governors, the Chancellor's Office, the governance of local districts and colleges—many of those aspects of the report that have to do with the CC's and that will have no effect on their relationship with the CSU or the UC.

Many people will find much to favor in the report; others will find much to attack. The sections that deal with access and success, as far as I can tell, are really what many of us have been asking for for the last few years. The controversial issues, I suspect, will be those concerning how the institutions are run and who gets to

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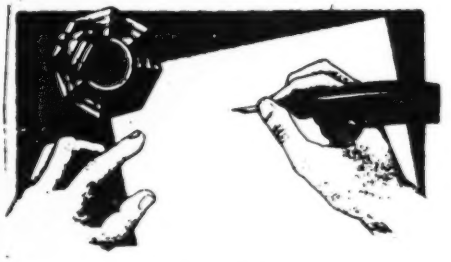
A NEW POETRY EDITOR

inside english is pleased to welcome ROBERT RIPPY of San Bernardino Valley College as the new poetry editor. Bob has been published in several magazines and has read his poetry publicly, most recently at the ECC-TYC Biennial Statewide Conference in San Francisco, November 1985. Below is one of the poems he read at that conference:



The Magic Bar

Surprised to find ourselves here again,
we fidget and murmur. Glasses clink.
An old man orders another beer
and asks the time.
Someone keeps tapping.

When the bartender's sold enough drinks,
he tests our need with a joke or two.
At last he spreads a deck of cards
along the bar like a grin
and has a woman pick one.

That's when things start to change.
That card turns up everywhere—
inside a coat, behind an ear.
It rises, like steam, from glasses.
It becomes the empty air.

Then a cigarette burns its way
through a coin, which heals itself
to pass in and out of a bottle too small,
to cartwheel over bartender fingers
into god knows where.

In cardflash and coinflick,
in the ballet two hands perform,
we watch the real world disappear.
The air is full of money and
each card knows its name.

When the bartender puts his cards away,
we clap uneasily, reluctant to leave.
The old man says he wouldn't change
one day of his life, and looks for ways
to touch the girl beside him.

The whores at the end of the bar wait.
They know how magic works—how magic
breeds a taste for magic. They put on
more lipstick, and smile, and know how much
we want it never to end.

Poetry submissions should be sent to Robert Rippy, English Department, San Bernardino Valley College, 710 So. Mt. Vernon Avenue, San Bernardino, CA 92403. Be sure to enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelop with your submission.

SACRAMENTO SCENE

(Continued from Page 11)

do it. Some people who think their power will be diminished will, of course, oppose the change; and some who see theirs increased will favor them regardless of their benefits or detriments to the institutions.

In reading the document closely enough to try to summarize it, I found much of the language ambiguous, vague, and jargonistic enough that in some cases the difficulties will come in trying to guess at the Commission's meaning and translating that into relevant actions and practices. The Commission took its job very seriously and worked hard at it, but whoever wrote the report seems to have felt constrained to bring together all the proper buzz words, the polysyllabic abstractions that while addressing real and serious and pressing questions tend to make the report hard to read and to make nonsense out of many statements if one tries to read them very closely. Consider the logical juxtaposition of these words: "Access must be meaningful: and to be meaningful, it must be access to a quality system that helps ensure the success of every student who enrolls. The responsibility for this success falls on all who participate—particularly those who teach and those who learn." The obscurity of the first part is over-balanced by the obviousness of the second part. Many concepts remain undefined, unexplained, as they have been for years, and the RC has made no attempt to clarify them. If we examine such terms as *adult learners*, *minority education*, *underserved* without ever considering the people who sort of hover in the background of our minds, the meanings of these terms evaporate in evanescent abstractions and lead us nowhere; we should not pursue excellence, we should pursue people who do excellent work. All these terms leave us pursuing the hot air that issues from a lot of educational discourse rather than dealing with the realities of the classroom; the personalities of the students and the teachers and the nature of the subjects that they pursue. Let's hope that we can make sense of the whole thing before long.

THE WRITING LAB

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segregating minority students, administrators risk legal repercussions and charges of bias and discrimination. An alternative which seems to have a good deal of promise is the writing lab concept.

In October the Literature and Language Division at Orange Coast College authorized the hiring of a linguist, myself, to help set up a Writing Lab for students in remedial English classes. This move was in response to requests from the English faculty that something be done to help them more effectively teach the remedial student population. It was felt at the time that the most effective way to help these students would be through a program of individual tutoring. Students were told that the Lab would be open two days a week and that they could come in any time on either day. Preliminary results of the program indicate that the students liked the program. When the students were offered the opportunity of coming to the Lab either one or two hours per week, the students who made the most use of the Lab were the minority and second language students who needed the extra help.

An example of this type of student is the black student who has special trouble with subject-verb agreement, final *-s* plurals, possessive *-s*, final *-ed* of verbs, and often omits the copula before adjective complements. In addition, he has special syntactic problems with relative clauses and infinitive and gerund phrases. Special exercises covering these areas can be administered in the Writing Lab, so that the student may proceed with his regular course work. The individual's teacher does not need to take the class time to help this student and may concentrate on the problems the whole class has in common: paragraph development, use of supporting detail, and transitional devices.

In this way, the student can be given help with only the linguistic areas where he has a deficit. At the same time, the Writing Lab instructor can foster improved study skills and renewed confidence in a student who up to this time has been ignored or shunted into special classes.

The teachers whose students participated likewise seemed to be positive about the results. The Lab served as a resource for them, providing new ideas, techniques, and resources for handling their teaching assignments. In addition, the Lab personnel had linguistic training and were able to diagnose language problems more quickly and to prescribe effective remedies for the problems.

Notices

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in the Literacy Debate" (Michael Cohen, Software Consultant, UCLA Writing Programs); "Bilingualism and Literacy Development" (Richard Duran, Assoc. Professor, Educational Psychology Program, Graduate School of Education, UC Santa Barbara); "Writing Across the Curriculum: Reasoning and Style" (Ellen Strenski, Upper-Division Coordinator, UCLA Writing Programs); "Literacy and the Imagination" (Gabriele Rico, Director of Composition Program, CSu San Jose; Hans Guth, Professor of English, CSU San Jose); "Evaluating Literacy" (Miles Myers, Bay Area Writing Project, UC Berkeley); and "Literacy and the Survival of Humanism" (Richard Lanham).

For further information, write or call Brenda Schildgen, Writing Program Director, Univ. of San Francisco, Ignation Heights, San Francisco 94117-1080. 415: 666-6809.

SCIENCE FICTION

26-29 June 1986. Science Fiction Research Association. San Diego State University. For information write Larry McCaffery, Dept. of English and Comparative Lit, San Diego State University, San Diego, CA 92182.

PENN STATE CONFERENCE

8-11 July 1986. Penn State Conference on Rhetoric and Composition. Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Penn. Speakers include Edward P.J. Corbett, Professor of English, Ohio State University; James Berlin, Director of Freshman English, University of Cincinnati; John Gage, Director of Composition, University of Oregon; Dixie Goswami, instructor at Clemson University and director of the Breadland Writing Project for Teachers; Maxine Hairston, Professor of English, University of Texas; and Geneva Smitherman, Director of basic course in Speech Communication Department, Wayne State University.

For further information write or call Rhetoric and Composition, Penn State University, 410 Keller Building, University Park, PA 16802.

DICKENS/SHAKESPEARE

1-10 August 1986. Dickens, Shakespeare, and the Theater. UC Santa Cruz. For complete information write Joel J. Brattin and Nan Dorsey, Dickens Project, Kresage College, University of California, Santa Cruz, CA 95064.

LITERATURE CONFERENCE

17-18 October 1986. Second City Colleges of Chicago National Literature Conference. "Literature Across the Disciplines: The Roles of Literature in the Community College. For Information write Professor Richard Lerner, City Colleges of Chicago, 30 East Lake Street, Chicago, IL 60601.

FIVE STEP PLAN

(Continued from Page 7)

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Gloria Reid, who has an M.S. from California State University, Hayward, and an M.A. in English Composition from San Francisco State University, currently teaches reading and English courses at Ohlone College and is active on the Prerequisite Skills Committee. She has also taught at CSU Hayward, Diablo Valley College, and Heald Business College.

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